

**Unity and Faith: The negotiation of social and religious
identities in Calabar**

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Declaration

The contents of this thesis are my own work.

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Abstract

The thesis is an ethnographic study of the way that people in Calabar, southern Nigeria, participated in Efik religious institutions and several different Christian denominations. The thesis is based upon eighteen months fieldwork in Calabar between 1993 and 1995. Further fieldwork was also completed in Scotland between 1992 and 1995. In Calabar, religious participation is approached as part of the negotiation of the multiple social identities that occurs in post-colonial urban centres in West Africa. The thesis focuses upon the debates that were occurring between people belonging to the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, Duke Town Parish, and people who attended Pentecostal ministries founded in the 1990s.

The thesis opens with a discussion of contemporary social, religious and political institutions in Calabar. The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria is contextualised through an examination of the culture of the Scottish Presbyterian Mission that was established in the city in 1846. I discuss how Scottish missionaries and indigenous leaders interacted within the colonial context. I then turn to look at the way this mission history is perceived and represented by contemporary Presbyterians and Pentecostals. I also examine the impact that the Pentecostal movement has exerted beyond the boundaries of the ministries. The Duke Town Presbyterian Church has incorporated several aspects of Pentecostal worship since 1990, a decision that has precipitated debates among the congregation between traditional and born-again Presbyterians.

The social and economic concerns of participants in selected Pentecostal ministries are described. I show how the ministries provided people with meeting places and social networks outside family or work domains. The ministries also addressed the widespread concern among participants with deliverance from the spirits of the indigenous cosmology. The case studies illustrate the way that people attributed power to different ministries to provide

deliverance from spiritual attack. The ministries provided protective social and spiritual arenas for people who feel vulnerable within the urban environment. I show how this sense of vulnerability was particularly evident among younger, educated men and women, middle-aged married women and recent migrants to the city of Calabar. People in the Pentecostal ministries have increasingly entered public debates on the economy and political institutions of Calabar during the 1990s.

The thesis finds that in the early 1990s, religious organisations were social arenas within which many people living in Calabar debated wider social, economic and political concerns. The Pentecostal movement emphasised differences between Christian denominations and strongly opposed traditional religious practices. The early 1990s can be seen as a period during which the religious tolerance described by several observers in the 1980s appears to have declined.

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Chapter One Theoretical and methodological perspectives

Introduction

In this chapter I first present an overview of the main themes that run through the thesis. I introduce the case studies that I use to explore and illustrate these themes. This is followed by a review of the anthropological literature on European mission in Africa and Pentecostalism. In the review I discuss how the themes of the thesis contribute to, and engage with, different aspects of this literature. In the next section I discuss in greater depth the two main areas of theory that I use to interpret the ethnography. I then describe the methodology that I used to do the research project and the fieldwork sites. The chapter ends with a summary of the chapters that follow.

Overview

The thesis focuses upon debates that were occurring during the early 1990s in Calabar within the Presbyterian Church and certain Pentecostal ministries. The Presbyterian Church was the oldest Christian denomination in the city, established in 1846. By contrast, the Pentecostal ministries I focus upon were all founded in the early 1990s. These ministries were part of the most recent wave of the Pentecostal revival that started in Calabar in the 1970s. As Hackett rightly predicted, the Pentecostal ministries have become prominent religious organisations in the city (Hackett 1989:365). The debates within the Presbyterian Church and the Pentecostal ministries centred upon two interrelated issues. The first was the extent to which Pentecostal practices should be adopted within the Presbyterian Church. The Pentecostal movement had prompted divisions within the Presbyterian

Church of Nigeria in Calabar between people who described themselves as traditional and born-again Presbyterians¹. The second concern was the stance that the Christian denominations should take towards the practice of traditional religion and the political and social institutions that rested upon the authority of the indigenous cosmology. In the thesis these debates are explored from different perspectives and are set within the context of the religious history of the city.

The thesis examines how the Pentecostal movement in the 1990s intensified debates in Calabar about what should be understood by tradition and modernity in the churches. Concerns with definitions of tradition and modernity within different denominations in Calabar form a theme that runs throughout the thesis. The Pentecostal movement defined itself in part through the strong rejection of the traditional beliefs, practices and institutions that rested upon the spiritual authority of the indigenous cosmology. I was struck by the apparent contrast with the religious tolerance noted by Hackett between Christian denominations and 'traditional' practitioners in Calabar in the 1970s and early 1980s (1989:362). A notable change in the atmosphere seemed to have taken place by the 1990s, the likely consequence of the stance the newer Pentecostal churches have taken against ecumenicalism.

In order to contextualise the Pentecostal critique of the mission and appreciate the nuances of the Presbyterian response, I present a detailed study of the culture of the Scottish Presbyterian mission. The way the Scottish Presbyterian mission was perceived and represented by people in Calabar in the 1990s was an important part of this contemporary debate. Many Pentecostals claimed that the Presbyterian Church was 'too

¹ Such divisions have prompted schisms in the Presbyterian Church in Ghana (Meyer 1994) but Calabar presents a case in which such schisms have not occurred, maybe because several Pentecostal forms have been introduced into the church.

traditional'. People in the Pentecostal movement problematised aspects of Presbyterian history in Calabar, particularly the relation between the mission and indigenous institutions. Pentecostals often argued that the traditional beliefs and practices glossed as 'cultural tradition' by the mission and colonial authorities were in fact religious concerns and should be condemned as 'evil beliefs'. I consider the complex, and often contradictory, place of the mission in relation to indigenous authority in the colonial context. Many studies of the impact of European missionaries in Africa have focused solely upon doctrine and ignored the cultural practices that often play a large part in conversion (Green 1993). I adopt the view that mission cultures usually differ, each being informed by a specific home culture, and that these differences influence the mission encounter (Beidelman 1982, Comaroff 1985, Comaroff and Comaroff 1991). The close study of the Presbyterian mission in Calabar provides new perspectives on the place of the mission in the colonial context and raises questions about way missions are perceived as archetypal features of modernisation. The co-operation between the mission and traditional authority meant many people in the hinterland said they considered Calabar to be a more dangerous 'traditional' centre than the village they had left, inverting the usual representations of the city as modern and the rural hinterland as traditional.

Becoming born-again entailed opposing tradition and questioning definitions of modernity. Many definitions of modernity are informed by western European social history. Habermas emphasises the experience of a break with the past as typifying the modern condition (1987), while Berman focuses upon the disruptive processes of migration (Berman 1983). Lash and Friedman (1992) and Giddens (1990,1991) have focused upon new subjectivities of the self. However, anthropological research tells us that modernity can be experienced in different ways and varied forms throughout the world (Miller 1994, 1995b). In the thesis I focus upon the way that Pentecostalism interacts with three models of modernity which are salient

for the analysis of religious movements in Calabar; the disenchantment of the world, as described by Weber (1965), the complexities of the formation of social identity (Calhoun 1994) and the processes of globalisation (Featherstone 1990). I approach the study of Pentecostalism by focusing on particular ministries and people who participated in them. Many studies of Pentecostalism in Africa have been generalised accounts of the movement rather than studies of particular denominations (Maxwell 1998b:257). In this way the thesis contributes to the literature on Pentecostalism in Africa by providing a study of people within specific Pentecostal denominations.

For many people in Calabar living in an urban centre, often defined as a modern experience, did not bring the secularisation also considered to characterise modernity. On the contrary, people who migrated to the city seemed keen to join religious organisations when they reached the city and address their concerns about the complexities of the urban commercial economy in such contexts. Indeed, within the Pentecostal movement in the city, spiritualised interpretations were made not only about the workings of local tradition but also about the State bureaucracy. Among the concerns was the question of how to negotiate ethnic and gender identity. Migration to the city produced contrasting cultural categories of indigene and migrant that were defined using ethnicity as a social marker. Definitions of gender identity were questioned by the changing roles of men and women in the urban cash economy.

The study of the negotiation of social identities also draws attention to the way that the globalised model of Pentecostalism was deployed by people in Calabar to address local concerns. By grounding the research in the social interaction among participants in particular ministries, the thesis highlights the tensions between the social egalitarianism often professed in the globalised movement and the social hierarchies that ministries clearly accommodated on a daily basis. The thesis provides a counterweight to

work that examines how the globalised media images of Pentecostalism draw people in to a global community and establish 'an identity and community beyond the nation-state' (Marshall 1998:281). Instead, I focus upon the way that Pentecostal affiliation is used to negotiate social identity in local settings. In Calabar paramount rulers, their councils and customary courts, form a tier of local government that influence people's daily lives. The formation of ministries as a larger movement was organised around a shared opposition to tradition. This opposition to tradition questions the basis of the authority of the institutions of local government in Calabar. The stance against traditional office articulated by Pentecostals in Calabar contests the continued proliferation of such offices in the post-colonial state as documented by Savage (1985). Pentecostals argued that incumbents of traditional government were corrupt and monopolised access to State and Federal resources. I suggest that the Pentecostal proscription of involvement in traditional institutions highlighted the exclusion of many people from the networks of patronage that fostered links between local and national government institutions.

The themes explored in the thesis suggest new approaches towards the study of Pentecostalism as a transnational religious movement. The analysis of ways in which Pentecostals in Calabar addressed the complexities of living in an urban centre offers new perspectives on the way modernity is experienced and interpreted in particular locations. The ideas and organisational forms of global movements are brought to bear upon local debates. This provides a counter balance to those studies that focus upon the way new adherents of globalised religious movements seek to transcend local concerns by becoming incorporated within a global community. In this way, the thesis expands understandings about the ways religious movements are formed in post-colonial contexts.

The themes explored in the thesis are elucidated through the use of selected ethnographic research focusing upon people and events within Presbyterian and Pentecostal denominations, as well as relevant events that occurred in the wider context of the city. Those studies that I carried out within the Presbyterian Church in Calabar contribute to the small anthropological literature on mission founded denominations in Africa. The Presbyterian Church in Calabar took place at Duke Town parish. Duke Town was selected because the parish was the focus of debates about the place of Pentecostalism in the Church. Two ministers had been to Duke Town by the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria (PCN) from Aba and Arochukwu between 1990-1994 to introduce Pentecostal practices and curtail the links members had fostered with traditional societies. The parish was also selected because it was at the centre of debates over representations of mission history and interactions with traditional institutions, as occurred at the 1994 Calabar Festival and the Hope Waddell Institute Centenary in 1995. The focus upon Duke Town parish is used to explore the way mission history is represented in Presbyterian Church in Calabar. The ethnographic examples highlight the reasons why Calabar was still considered a traditional centre by many people. The focus on Duke Town Church also illustrates the extent to which the PCN did incorporate Pentecostal forms, possibly in this way forestalling the schism that occurred in the Presbyterian Church in Ghana (Meyer 1994).

The events I analyse at Duke Town parish highlight the complexities of the relationship between the mission churches and indigenous institutions, both in the past and in the present. The relationship between the Presbyterian Church and the *ekpe* society is contextualised through an examination of the history of the Presbyterian mission in Calabar. I use archival material to examine how the early missionaries related to indigenous and Consular authority in Calabar. Then, through interviews with returned Scottish missionaries, I examine the ways in which the relationship between the Presbyterian mission, indigenous government and colonial government

altered in the twentieth century. These historical perspectives provide a background from which to examine the nuances of contemporary debates between Pentecostals and Presbyterians about the place of tradition in the Presbyterian Church.

The research completed among the Pentecostals in Calabar focuses upon people from five ministries; Intercessors Bible Mission (IBM), Overcomers Bible Mission, Greater Revival Ministry, Liberty Gospel Ministry and the Descendants of Israel Ministry. These particular ministries were selected because they had all been formed in the early 1990s. I wanted to focus upon the contemporary manifestations of the Pentecostal revival which complements the research already done on the 1970s churches by Hackett (1989). The five ministries I focus upon were all run by people from the south-east of Nigeria, as were most of the ministries in Calabar². The newer ministries that I focus upon also exhibited the general trend that had existed in Calabar since the 1980s away from interdenominational prayer groups. Instead ministries were formed as corporate institutions, owning or renting a permanent site. A ministry usually included several sub-organisations. In addition to the fellowship, which was the group of participants, there could be a nursery school, a missionary department, a printing press or a magazine. The ministry as a whole formed a corporate group. Mbon has noted that ministries do constitute business opportunities, particularly in the south-east of Nigeria where there are few industries. Indeed, Mbon notes that one Nigerian politician described Calabar as having 'only churches and prayer houses as its major industries' (Mbon 1991:11). The income generated by the new churches was reflected in increased government regulation of new Pentecostal ministries. Continuing the metaphors of marketing, the ministries in Calabar could be seen as 'small businesses'

² The global Pentecostal ministries that are often founded and based in the United States exist in larger cities in Nigeria. However, such denominations were not common in Calabar.

rather than 'global franchises', and they sought to differentiate themselves to attract members. In Calabar I suggest that the ministries remained more denominational than those in larger urban centres like Lagos, and less influenced by the interdenominational media that has been noted by Marshall-Fratani (1998:283).

The research also draws attention to the way ministries as social institutions formed sites in which people could pursue educational and managerial ambitions denied in the state sector. The ethnographic studies reflect the rapid expansion of prosperity preaching within the Pentecostal movement in the early 1990s³. Most ministries started in the 1990s preached the prosperity gospel. Research done among participants at the Liberty Gospel Ministry, which was a holiness⁴ church, points to some ways that the prosperity movement is criticised by people outside its ranks. The prosperity ministries exhibited none of the dilemmas about the morality of wealth accumulation and consumption that have been noted in the Pentecostal movement (Meyer 1995). The thesis draws attention to the way that the prosperity ministries constituted an element of the Pentecostal movement that incorporated elite social groups within their membership, accumulating a secure financial base and showing a new concern with economic issues in wider society.

The studies of the different ministries encompass diverse participants and reflect the differences between the ministries as social institutions. I decided to focus upon more than one ministry to reflect the way people frequently transferred their affiliation between different denominations. People often

³ Prosperity teaching claimed that church participants were rewarded with material 'blessings' as well as spiritual ones. Often the financial blessings that were received were said by pastors to be in recognition of money that had been donated to the church. I discuss the prosperity gospel in greater depth in chapter six.

⁴ The holiness Pentecostal ministries claim that participants should refrain from lavish consumption and possession of material goods. This was the most prevalent Pentecostal teaching until the prosperity movement started to reach Nigeria in the 1980s.

attended different ministries, when they travelled to other cities, when they were invited to ceremonies by family and friends, or simply to see what was going on in the newest ministry. In this way the different ministries can be considered together as part of the Pentecostal 'cultural complex' that Meyer discusses with reference to the Pentecostal movement in Ghana, that share a common set of doctrines and practices (1998:321). The focus upon five ministries also enables an exploration of the disputes that occurred within particular ministries. By grounding the study in specific denominations, it is also possible to balance the idea of the shifting of people between churches with an appreciation of the way in which participants did decide to join a particular ministry and indicated their decision through being baptised into the church.

The focus upon specific denominations allows close study of the way in which differences in the age, gender, social status, occupation and ethnicity of participants influence social relations within the collectivity of each ministry. The social relations between Pentecostal converts and family members who were not born-again have been examined by Meyer (1998). Yet within the ministry people continue to interact with family members who are Pentecostals in other ministries. The thesis highlights the social relations between Pentecostals who live within the urban economy. While links to extended family in the villages did cause problems as in the cases Meyer analyses (1995, 1998), I suggest that social relations among urban dwellers who were Pentecostals also contained tensions. Most Pentecostals in Calabar were first or second generation migrants to the city who had ties to extended family in both the villages and the city. Indeed from the perspective of many migrants, the case studies suggest that it was the town, rather than the rural villages, that was considered the main centre of spiritual threat. Calabar was thought by many people in rural parts of the south-east to be a traditional centre. The dangers of spiritual attack from

witchcraft and *ndem* possession among urban dwellers was considered to match that which occurred between villagers and their migrant relatives.

The five ministries also reflected the diverse ways ethnicity and gender informed affiliation. People in the Pentecostal movement articulate a general opposition to 'tribalism' as has been noted in other studies (Marshall 1998). The research, however, highlights ways in which ethnicity was a marker of social difference that did influence social relations within the ministries. Affiliation to particular ministries could be seen to be associated with networks of ethnicity. In fact, I suggest that joining a ministry provided a social arena in which younger people could cultivate ties within social networks based on ethnicity without attending the 'traditional' ceremonies run by older men.

The studies of the particular ministries also provide new perspectives upon gender relations within Pentecostal ministries. Women still constituted about two-thirds of the membership in most ministries in Calabar, but in the prosperity ministries there were often equal numbers of men and women attending. The research also reflects another new trend, the prominent role that women were taking on in founding and leading ministries in the 1990s. This thesis contributes to the literature on the Pentecostal movement in Africa by providing case studies of specific women who were Pentecostal leaders. These individual studies show how the movement was providing a social arena in which women could exercise leadership roles, and which challenged the 'traditional' hierarchies of other social institutions in the city that rested upon male gerontocracy and only incorporated women as 'honorary' members.

Anthropological perspectives on mission and the Pentecostal movement

Here I focus upon the anthropological research that frames the debates that I take up in the thesis. The thesis brings together two areas of study that until recently have not been widely researched in the anthropological literature on religion in Africa, the 'mission church' denominations and the new Pentecostal ministries established in early 1990s. The first ethnographies of European mission were published in the early 1980s (Beidelman 1982, Clifford 1982). There are few anthropological studies of the contemporary denominations founded by the European mission societies, with the exception of Green's study of Pogoro Catholics (1993) and, in geography, Gormley's study of Catholic women in Uganda (1998).

In the absence of writing by anthropologists on European mission in Africa, most research until the 1980s was published by missionaries and historians. The nineteenth century Scottish missionaries of the United Presbyterian Church (UPC) who reached in Calabar in 1846 published descriptions Calabar society and mission work in monthly mission journals. Between 1862 and 1897 some of the first missionaries posted in Calabar produced autobiographical accounts that provide detailed descriptions of daily life at the different mission stations and the establishment of the colonial administration in the 1890s (Waddell 1863, Goldie 1890). Between 1915 and 1930 the United Free Church published biographies of the Calabar missionaries for a wider readership. The narratives related nostalgic and heroic stories of missionary 'adventure' that romanticised the physical dangers and high mortality rates among missionaries like the famous Mary Slessor (Livingstone 1915, 1916, 1920). At the end of the colonial period missionaries published tracts on the links between mission and the colonial government (MacFarlan 1946, Oliver 1965). Many missionaries feared the independent State might become divorced from Christianity and that

'organised Christianity' might 'disintegrate' from the centre (Oliver 1965:291). Mission writing on Calabar culture and religion became concerned that Christian converts might 'backslide' into 'traditional religious practices' (Livingstone:1920).

African historians highlighted the extent to which the projects of nineteenth century European missions both facilitated, and were facilitated by, the expansion of European colonial rule (Ajayi 1965, Ayandele 1966, Ekechi 1971). Ajayi focused upon the way the Nigerian political elite which founded the nationalist movement was fostered by mission education, while Ayandele broadened the focus to encompass the responses of a wider section of the African community. Ajayi argues that after 1891 the expansion of the mission was 'largely incidental to the establishment of colonial administration' (1965:xiii) while Ayandele noted the 'limitations of missionaries in the implementation of their idealistic social programme in Nigeria before the establishment and consolidation of British rule (Ayandele 1966:331). Both Ajayi and Ayandele emphasised the 'common goals' held by British missionaries and the 'secular arm of Britain', the colonial administration (Ayandele 1966:xvii). The social distinctions within African societies had been emphasised by Ajayi and Ayandele but the European missionaries and colonial administrators remained undifferentiated.

Work by African historians on the involvement of the European missions in colonial government inspired a critical re-assessment of mission research at the 1968 International African Institute seminar (Baeta 1968:xiii). New research was proposed on the influences of the Home Mission on missionary work, on syncretism, mission interaction with African communities, traders and colonial administrators and the motives and methods of missionaries (1968:3-13). Of the themes, conversion and syncretism became the focus of anthropological and sociological studies. The research on conversion and syncretism was concerned with the 'traditional' and processes of social

change, particularly the question of how 'traditional cosmologies' are informed by changing the social experiences that result from rapid change in social organisations, through processes of syncretism and conversion (Peel 1968, Horton, 1971). Horton argued that Kalabari conversion to independent churches was motivated by the impact of economic change on the 'traditional' African cosmology not European missionary evangelism (Horton 1971). While Horton's intellectualism did not ignore the social experience that informed cosmology (Horton & Peel 1976:485), his focus on modes of thought and his marginalisation of the mission culture overlooked the impact of those mission social practices that were never articulated as doctrine, but which still informed conversion (Green 1993).

The first detailed research by anthropologists on European mission appeared in 1982, when Beidelman's ethnographic account of an Anglican mission in Kenya and Clifford's biography of Maurice Leenhardt in New Caledonia were published. Since that date, further ethnographic research has been conducted on the culture of mission in Africa (James & Johnson 1988, Green 1993) and the social identity of missionaries in their home culture (Comaroff & Comaroff 1991). Recent biographies have examined the ethnographic writings of missionaries (Forster 1989). Research has also recently been conducted on women and missions (Bowie 1993, Gormley 1998). Ethnographic studies of European mission culture in Africa have provided new perspectives on the complex and often contradictory place of the missionary within the colonial context. It is clear that European missionaries facilitated interaction between colonised and colonising worlds and, in part, mission fostered the 'conversion to modernity'. Whereas earlier research on mission had argued that mission culture legitimised colonial authority, ethnographic studies have illustrated how cultural practices brought about that legitimisation. In some contexts, conversion to forms of modernity in the mission was apparent in new 'imaginations of community', such as the separation of the public and private (Van Rooden 1996:8), the

interiorisation of belief and privatisation of conversion (Van der Veer 1996), all of which were involved in joining a globalised mission culture (Comaroff & Comaroff 1991). Sanneh presents the European missions of the nineteenth century as wholly modernising forces. He states that missionaries were of the opinion that 'there was no better harbinger of the new creation than silent plumbing, no brighter hope than electricity and no higher symbol of a redeemed humanity than the modern bio-medical system' (Sanneh 1993:22).

In the thesis I suggest the ways Presbyterian missionaries in Calabar interrogated elements of 'modern culture'. An ethnography of mission draws attention to the extremely diverse social and political identities of European missionaries. Before ethnography of mission, mission culture was often reduced to the Christian doctrines that the missionaries espoused (Green 1993). The emphasis upon conversion in the literature on missions in Africa, highlighted the distinctions between Christians and potential converts and overlooked the diversity of social identity among missionaries within particular Christian denominations because 'Christianity is framed in universal terms, which ideally override ethnicity, nationality, class and income' (Beidelman 1974:239). The definition of Christianity and conversion in terms of doctrine has permitted the assertion that the Bible can exist 'outside' its cultural context, yet missionary translations often draw upon indigenous cosmology and are in turn open to re-interpretation and appropriation by the converts (Meyer 1994).

While European missionaries have often been undifferentiated theologically and culturally they encompassed diverse theologies and social identities (Beidelman 1974, Etherington 1977). Recent research on women missionaries by historians and anthropologists has highlighted a further aspect of the social identity of the European missionary in Africa (Bowie *et al* 1993, Gormley 1998). Beidelman's 1982 ethnography of an Anglican

mission in East Africa was the first ethnographic study of a mission by an anthropologist⁵ and the first to examine how the diverse social identities of missionaries informed the missionary encounter with African societies (Beidelman 1974, 1982). However Beidelman did not extend the study to encompass fully the political culture in which the Christian Missionary Society (CMS) mission was formed in England, despite arguing that 'missionary theories of society are reflections of the particular cultures and segments of society from which the missionaries themselves have sprung, perhaps far more than being any reflections of the actual states of society on which these have been applied' (Beidelman 1974:242). The first study to integrate the home culture of the mission was Comaroff and Comaroff's study of the Methodist mission in South Africa, which examines the culture of the 'British non-conformist missionary'. While I question aspects of the social identity of the 'British non-conformist' missionary portrayed by Comaroff and Comaroff, I adopt their theoretical premise that the missionary encounter 'must be regarded as a two-sided historical process: as a dialectic that takes into account the social and cultural endowments of, and the consequences for, all actors, missionaries no less than Africans' (Comaroff & Comaroff 1991:54).

The Pentecostal 'born-again' movement is expanding rapidly throughout Africa, yet there has been only a small amount of anthropological fieldwork completed among born-again people on the continent (Meyer 1994, 1995, 1998; Hackett 1998; Marshall 1991, 1993, 1995, 1998; Van Dijk 1992, 1995, 1996, 1997; Maxwell 1995, 1998). There is still not an ethnographic study that takes a single Pentecostal denomination in Africa as its focus. This

⁵Beidelman's study covers the period from the establishment of the CMS mission at Ukaguru in 1876, up until Beidelman's fieldwork there in 1957-8. Etherington argues that sociological research on European mission in Africa has already been carried out. He cites work by Oliver on 'theories of empire and imperial expansion (1952), the rise of new elites (Ayandele 1966), the foundations of nationalism (Ajayi 1965, Etherington 1977). However, I agree with Beidelman, for none of these texts explores the local culture of a particular European mission.

thesis aims to provide ethnographic material that expands what is known about particular Pentecostal denominations in Africa. Far more research has been done on Pentecostalism in the Americas and Europe. In the USA, where many of the global Pentecostalist ministries are based, there has been sociological research on the organisation of ministries (Williams 1974) and a particular emphasis upon gender, (Brusco 1997, Stocks 1997, Eisland 1997, Bauer 1997). A further theme has been the communications technology that emanates from the USA and produces television programmes for the global born-again movement (Bruce 1990, Marshall 1998, Hackett 1998). In South America the political impact of the born-again movement has been the focus of the bulk of research, in Mexico (Bowen 1986), Chile (Martin 1996) and Nicaragua (Lancaster 1984). Outside the Americas, born-again ministries have been studied in Europe where gender has again been a focus, firstly in Cucchiari's research among Pentecostalists in Southern Italy (Cucchiari 1990), and also in the work of Toulis (1997) which examines the construction of gender and ethnic identity among Jamaican Pentecostalists in England.

The anthropological literature on Pentecostalism in Africa is still relatively small considering the pervasive influence of the movement on the continent. Here I discuss key themes from the current literature that relate to the ethnographic study and theoretical debates in the thesis. Many writers on Pentecostalism in Africa have discussed the widespread rejection of 'tradition' by members of the born-again movement (Marshall 1991,1993,1995,1998; Meyer 1995, 1998; Hackett 1998; Maxwell 1998). Pentecostalists are not permitted to participate in local 'traditions'. These traditions include; rituals performed by secret societies, rituals surrounding the installation and burial of paramount rulers, 'traditional' marriage and most often mentioned, libation, which includes prayers that incorporates those present into a community that includes the spirits and ancestors. People in the Pentecostal movement also object to the way that such

traditions have been sponsored by the Nigerian State in events like the Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC) held in Lagos in 1977 (Marshall 1991,1993,1995,1998; Meyer 1994, 1998; Hackett 1998). Meyer shows how in Ghanaian Pentecostal ministries the interpretations of mission translations by people at the grassroots equated the Devil with traditional spirits and so led to the increased demonisation of 'traditional spirits' (1994).

Meyer has also shown how Pentecostals in Accra draw upon 'image of the Devil and the imagination of evil' to question their experience of modernity and highlight the 'negative aspects of the capitalist world economy' (Meyer 1995:250). Meyer argues that the narratives of 'satanic riches' common among Pentecostals in Accra reflect fears that successful participation in the modern capitalist economy ruptures the bonds of family life (1995). However, as I discuss below, while a similar wariness of material consumption existed within the holiness churches in Calabar, it was not apparent in the newer prosperity churches where material wealth was considered an indication of 'God's blessing'⁶. Meyer shows how Pentecostals' experience of deliverance and possession explore the ambivalence of social relations within the family in the context of rural-urban migration. Many Pentecostals in Calabar said that they felt the contradictions between the goals of individual enrichment and the demands of the extended family in the village. Meyer examines how Pentecostals who become successful in the city seek to cut ties with relatives in the village and 'village traditions' but find it difficult to sever these ties. 'Rather than exchanging 'past identity' with its emphasis on family ties for a new, individual identity, it offers members an elaborate discourse and ritual practice to oscillate between both and to address the gap which exists between aspirations and actual conditions' (1998:340). In Calabar the

⁶ Maxwell notes that Pentecostals in Zimbabwe had a similar view (Maxwell 1998a:14).

demands of the extended family on the urban dweller emanated not only from the rural relations but also relations living elsewhere in the city.

Identity and religious movements

In this section I examine in greater detail the main theoretical perspectives that I use to analyse the case studies of the religious affiliation of individual converts and the social collectivities that constitute the Presbyterian Church and the Pentecostal movement in Calabar. I use theoretical approaches that elucidate the construction of social identities and processes of identification. Social identities are produced through the signifying practices and symbolic frameworks that make up representational systems. These representational systems generate the meanings that interpret social interaction and also position people in relation to one another. If the construction of social identity is approached as relational, then one identity can be seen to be defined in a relationship of contrast or similarity to another. I therefore approach the constitution of social identity as a process, viewing social identities as constructed through difference, through the 'eye of the needle of the Other' (Hall,1996:21). Identification can be defined as the process of identifying with others, usually through perceived similarities, and which is a part of the production of social collectivities formed around social identities. The formation of social identity and processes of identification all take place within social relations that are shaped by different sets of power relations. These power relations define the included and excluded within the identity of a social group, and in turn influence the way that the group interacts with other social groups. As Rutherford has stated, 'identity is the intersection of our everyday lives with the economic and political relations of subordination and domination' (Rutherford 1990:19-20).

The concepts of social identity and identification used in the thesis to examine the process of religious affiliation in Calabar are appropriate for

several reasons. Firstly, Pentecostal converts perceived that becoming born-again transformed other aspects of their social identity. Conversion influenced how the person related to people at home and at the workplace in terms of gender, ethnicity, economic status and family ties. I suggest that becoming born-again reorientates other social identities, particularly gender and ethnicity, the very aspects of social identities that are challenged and changed by living and working within the urban economy. The concept of identity and identification allows us to analyse the different aspects of the way individual converts related to the institutions of wider society. The construction of individuals as converts is related to the construction of social collectivities that form the religious movement (Rouse 1995:351). Most importantly in Calabar, becoming born-again was defined by converts as absolutely incompatible with other religious identities. In the definition of religious identities, Pentecostals included all practices affiliated to the beliefs of the indigenous cosmology, practices that were defined by other people in Calabar as 'cultural' or 'traditional'. The born-again convert was not to take part in these traditional ceremonies, even as an onlooker. I suggest that this withdrawal from traditional practices had significant impact upon the way that ethnic association was experienced by Pentecostals. In order to become a fully-fledged participant in the institutions of ethnic groups in Calabar, to take chieftaincy titles, or to get married it was necessary to take part in 'traditional' ceremonies, for example, all incumbents of the Efik *Obongship* were initiates of the *ekpe* society. The word tradition was itself translated with reference to ethnicity as *eset efik* (lit. Efik fashion). I suggest that migration to Calabar from the hinterland and the success of younger indigenes in the economy outside the city has challenged ethnic associations that uphold the gerontocratic control of an indigenous elite.

Marshall has focused upon the way that Pentecostal conversion in Nigeria produces a delocalised and deterritorialised religious identity for converts

that transcends the nation-state (1998:278-9). Her research has focused upon the way that Pentecostalism as a transnational movement has a new significance for participants in an era of globalisation. The global Pentecostal media provides converts with new repertoires to 'imagine community beyond the local', leading to the deterritorialisation of culture. In this way, identity formation is delocalised, introducing a new negotiation between the local and the global (1998:280-1). Marshall then considers the impact of this new identity formation upon the nation-state, arguing that the affiliation to the global movement enables people to 'bypass' the state by gaining access to resources beyond it. Marshall argues that the Pentecostal concern to find a 'freedom from the communal past' is 'less about the contemporary threat that traditional religion poses in terms of religious competition, and more about its connection with a cultural past that failed to provide the moral grounding for a 'good' society in the present' (1998:287). However, I suggest that in Calabar many Pentecostals considered that the institutions of traditional religion did present a contemporary alternative to being born-again. Savage has shown that traditional culture was flourishing in Calabar in the early 1980s (1985) and many people said that the decline of the traditional societies had only occurred in the last five years. I suggest that Pentecostals in Calabar were not the delocalised subjects to the same extent as their Lagos counterparts discussed by Marshall. Local social divisions, often informed by ethnicity, continued to interweave throughout the globalised 'community of sentiment' constructed through shared TV broadcasts and popular publications.

Rather I show how the collective voice of the Pentecostal movement in Calabar was focused upon the ownership of local resources and was expressed through the metaphors of the occupation and protection of territory. New ministries were rarely built on new land outside the city, but instead often placed buildings near traditional centres to engage in 'spiritual battle'. The globalised media that produced the delocalised subject in Lagos

did not exist to the same extent in Calabar. Marshall focuses upon the way that the Pentecostalist transcends the boundaries of the State to participate in a global movement. Here I focus upon the political engagement that took place between the Pentecostal movement and the State in the local context of the city, that is, how Calabar ministries interacted with the traditional indigenous councils and the State administration. The concept of identification is used in the thesis to examine the way that religious and ethnic identities have been constructed within, and interacted with, both the colonial and post-colonial state in Nigeria. In the colonial era ethnicity was considered the fundamental social identity (Werbner and Ranger 1996:1). Rouse's discussion of the concept of identification⁷ provides a useful way of thinking about the incorporation of subjects into the colonial state. Rouse draws upon work by Anderson (1983) to discuss ways that the 'taxonomic state' constitutes and regulates subjects through registration, records, identity cards, and taxation'⁸ (Rouse 1995:362). In Nigeria, ethnic identity was politicised to become the criteria for the incorporation of people within the colonial state. Throughout the post-colonial period ethnicity remained politicised. States were created around ethnic units each group claiming a share of national resources. In the 1990s, local traditional leaders remained representatives to Federal Government, even if there were sections of the traditional ruling group who were bitterly opposed to government policies. I suggest that the Pentecostal movement was a foil to that upsurge of ethnic nationalism. Affiliation to the movement provided a social arena in which networks could be formed that addressed political concerns, but were not

⁷The concept of identification is drawn from Freudian psychology, and refers to the identification of the self with another. Social identification refers to the process by which people identify themselves with others on the basis of a perceived similarity.

⁸Rouse's definition of identification differs from that used by Hall (1988) who uses the concept of identification to examine how broad coalitions of mobilisation can be formed. Rouse argues that such coalitions are undermined by hegemonic practices that are 'built on the logic of identity', peculiar to the West (1995:176).

contained within the gerontocratic, hierarchical institutions that persisted in local political organisation based upon indigenous ethnic groups⁹.

The concept of identity is useful for an analysis of the political impact of religious movements because it can be applied both to individual participants and the religious movement they join. I draw upon theoretical perspectives from the study of social movements to examine exactly how the individual is set within the wider field of politics (Escobar 1992, Jelin 1987, Melucci 1988). The focus upon a multiple faceted social identity also reflects the fact that both religious and political concerns can be encompassed within the same movement and that the movement is not defined solely in terms of the State authority it resists and contests. In the 1960s anthropologists examined religious movements primarily as 'protests' against the social order (Worsley 1968, Ranger 1986:3). What Moore (1997) has termed 'ethnographies of resistance' replaced studies of political 'protest' in the 1980s (Taussig 1980, Comaroff 1985, Scott 1985). Comaroff examined the Zionist movement among the Tshidi in South Africa as a response to the incursion of the South African State and the capitalist economy (1985). She examines the changes to the pre-colonial Tshidi cosmology and argues that the Tshidi face 'a problem of symbolic mediation', that is, how to negotiate their responses to the encounter with the South African state and the process of incorporation within its economy. Comaroff uses a theoretical focus upon 'signifying practice' to explore Tshidi responses, arguing that the concept acknowledges the way Tshidi agency shaped the outcome of the encounter. She concludes that while the Independent churches among the Tshidi 'might not have signalled the

⁹ Identity is a culturally and historically specific concept that must be employed with care in cross-cultural analysis (Gleason 1983, Rouse 1995). Rouse argues that the western concept of identity rests upon certain cultural concepts of personhood, social collectivity and mobilisation that were products of Enlightenment philosophy and assumed an autonomous self who entered political action as part of an egalitarian collectivity (Rouse 1995:360).

development of a “working-class consciousness”, it objectified a cultural scheme that was to give a more explicit voice to the conflicts inherent in the shared experience of waged labour’ (Comaroff 1985:175). Zionism was considered to be a form of ‘ritualised resistance’ employed by the Tshidi in the face of incorporation by the state, and an ‘idiom’ through which the ‘peasant-proletarian majority objectifies and reacts to its predicament’ (Comaroff 1985:194).

Comaroff defines and assesses the aims and objectives of the Zionist movement with regard to their contribution to secular political change. Resistance to the state is ‘expressed’ in a religious movement. Comaroff cites Lantenari to argue that this is precisely because religious action is not considered to be political by the state, ‘because the *realpolitik* of oppression dictates that resistance be expressed in domains seemingly apolitical’ (Lantenari 1963:316). At the start of the book Comaroff points out that the ‘efficacy of such modes of resistance remains a matter of some controversy’ (1985:12-13). Comaroff concludes that the Zionist movement is ‘an expression of class conflict’ which is ‘not explicitly voiced or nicely articulated as class consciousness *per se*, but couched in the flexible symbols of Christian dissent’ (Worsley 1968:226)¹⁰.

A focus on identity and the part that identity formation takes in social movements mean that power and authority, ‘the political’ is given a broader and more culturally sensitive definition of activities, methods and motivations. Rather than distinguishing between religious and political actions and intentions, it is possible to consider how both address historicised concerns of power and authority (Fields 1982, 1985, Stirrat 1992). Fields’ analysis of the impact of the WatchTower movement upon

¹⁰However, in Comaroff’s work there is a sense of distance from the experience of the Zionists. The reader does not find out much about how they describe their membership of the movement and what participating in the church means to them.

the colonial state in Zambia illustrated how the opposition of WatchTower members to the authority of 'traditional religious leaders' threatened to undermine structures of indirect rule (1982, 1985). The structures of colonial government under traditional rule yielded a structure of resistance, for those who lived under colonial rule, 'knew how the colonial machinery worked. They knew because it worked on them...an archaic form of movement threw itself against an archaic form of state' (Fields 1985:274-77).

The post-colonial Nigerian State is defined as secular in the constitution. However, in the workings of the state administration at all levels political power is often spiritualised. This spiritualisation of government power has been noted in other post-colonial African states (Geschiere 1997). In Nigeria, traditional leaders continued to mediate between local level politics and State and Federal Government. Pentecostals in Calabar challenged the claim to the territory they said was controlled by the traditionalists. They also challenged the privileged links they perceived to exist between the traditional elite and other government bodies. Instead, Pentecostals articulated a counter claim to Calabar as their territory. Their arguments were very much based in a language of territory, a language that does not suggest a process of delocalisation but rather a change in the way that people assert their claims to own the land. The opposition to traditional government by Pentecostals also focused upon the claim that it was unrepresentative of the population. Within the ministries younger men and women who were excluded from traditional office could realise networks based upon a shared ethnicity. Within the Pentecostal movement a critique of the gerontocratic traditional elite emerged.

Methodological approaches

The research project had two main areas of focus that required different methodological approaches and raised different methodological concerns. The first area of focus was the Presbyterian mission that was based in Calabar from 1846 to the 1960s. I set out to explore how different people in Scotland and Calabar perceived the history of the mission and assessed its legacy. In Scotland I carried out archival research on the early history of the mission. I then wanted to find out how returned missionaries who lived in Calabar this century reflected upon their work at the mission. In Calabar I was interested in the way that people in different denominations represented mission history. The second focus in the research project concerned the debates occurring in the early 1990s within the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria (PCN) and the expansion of the Pentecostal movement in Calabar.

The thesis is based upon fieldwork carried out in Scotland and southern Nigeria between 1992 and 1995. Archival research on the history of the nineteenth century Presbyterian mission in Calabar was also completed in Scotland. The project started in Scotland where in 1992-3 I interviewed retired Scottish missionaries who had lived and worked in Calabar. In Calabar I found that interpretations of Scottish mission history played an important part in debates within the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria (PCN) and the new Pentecostal ministries about the impact of the Pentecostal movement in Calabar and within the PCN. In addition to doing fieldwork in ministries, I also spent time with people in their wider social contexts of home, work and family. When doing fieldwork in Presbyterian and Pentecostal ministries in Calabar I set out to examine how people's religious participation fitted in with other aspects of their social life in the city. The fieldwork was carried out both within the social arena of the ministries and in other social contexts frequented by people who belonged to the ministries, such as their home, workplace and various social gatherings. This

wider social focus enabled me to examine the way that the social life of the home and church were interconnected. In discussion with participants, the detailed recollection and representation of the mission past played a key part in the construction of contemporary religious identities. Through fieldwork and archival research I ensured that I gathered a comprehensive view of the mission era in Calabar through which I could appreciate and assess contemporary representations of the past. I go on to describe the methodologies that I employed during fieldwork in Scotland and Calabar among both Presbyterian and Pentecostalist ministries.

Particular methodological issues arise in doing anthropological research about missionaries. The missionary can often provide a disquieting presence for the ethnographer. Van der Geest and Kirby argue that anthropologists could be considered 'missionaries in reverse' as they 'tried to convert members of their own society into seeing the truth and civilisation of peoples which heretofore had been portrayed as irrational' (1992:78). The European missionary in Africa has often accumulated a more detailed knowledge of culture and language than the anthropologist can hope to emulate in two years of fieldwork. The missionary is both perceived by the local population, and feels, committed to the place in a way that the anthropologist usually is not (Van der Geest 1990:396). Like many other anthropologists, I valued the insights into Calabar society that I gained from conversations with European missionaries before I went to Nigeria.

I started fieldwork in 1992 in Scotland with retired missionaries from the Church of Scotland who had worked at the mission in Calabar. I first established contact with the missionaries by going to the headquarters of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh and discussing my research interests with the Mission and Aid Fund, the Church body that is now in charge of mission in Scotland and overseas. In 1946 the Presbyterian Church of Eastern

Nigeria (PCEN)¹¹ had been formed, an independent church for the first time outside the Synod of the Church of Scotland.¹² After contacting one missionary whose address I had been given by the church, I was soon introduced to others. Between 1992-5 I met up with those people who had shown an interest in taking part in the research.

Many of the missionaries who had worked in Calabar continued to stay in contact with one another and maintained a social network, which extended throughout Scotland. Each year missionaries who had worked in Calabar meet together at the 'Calabar Tea', which is held each year in Edinburgh during General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. When I was invited to attend this event in 1995 and 1996 I was struck by the level of interest shown in news and letters from people in Calabar. The group did not meet together solely to reminisce about the old days, most were actively involved in the lives of people in Calabar. There was an informal close network of communication that disseminated recent news received through visits and letters. I realised that my interest in the mission's history and experience was welcomed and I knew that one way I could reciprocate their participation in my research project was by using my recent contacts and visits to Calabar to enable them to contact people they had lost touch with. Beyond the opportunity to restore social contacts with old friends, I was also aware that the missionaries were interested to learn about how the current Presbyterian Church of Nigeria and how the Scottish mission was viewed by popular opinion.

¹¹The Presbyterian Church of Eastern Nigeria later became the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.

¹²The last Church of Scotland missionaries went to the PCN in the 1970s. Today the Church of Scotland sends 'partners' to work in Nigeria. I interviewed three missionaries who had visited Nigeria as 'partners'; Dr and Reverend Knox, missionaries in 1987 and Miss Archibald, mission teacher from 1964 to 1981.

The case studies from Scotland are based from my interaction with the missionaries at social events or interviews at their homes. Of the fifteen missionaries I met at their annual meeting, I carried out in-depth interviews with six people. Of these six, I focused upon four case studies which each highlighted specific aspects of mission. The six people that I interviewed were selected for several reasons. Firstly I wanted to find out about the way that the mission had changed over the years, so I spoke to people who had lived in Calabar at different times. Most people had spent at least ten years in Calabar, and several had been contemporaries there. The six missionaries I interviewed worked in Calabar between 1929 and 1987. The earliest arrival date, and the longest stay, was that of Reverend MacDonald who reached Calabar in 1929 and who left in 1967. The most recent work had been done by Miss Archibald who taught at a girls school and left in 1987. The missionaries who had been in Nigeria in the 1930s and 1940s generally had greater knowledge of indigenous languages and had taught in the vernacular, while later missionaries like Miss Archibald taught solely in English.

The missionaries I interviewed shared similar educational backgrounds, they were all university graduates and had professional qualifications in health and education. These high levels of education and training were shared by all the missionaries I met. The people that I interviewed had all worked as teachers, hospital staff or administrators in the educational service provided by the mission for the colonial government. I interviewed four men and two women, reflecting the relative numbers of men and women involved in mission work in Calabar. More men became missionaries than women, because men were often recruited from theological college while they were being trained as ministers. However, missionary work did provide women with one of the few avenues for travel and attaining posts within the church. Mary Slessor was a well-known missionary in Calabar and Scotland and there was a long history of women's involvement in the mission. The men

and women I interviewed had done similar tasks, working as teachers or in hospitals.

The interviews were mostly done during visits to the missionaries in their homes. Usually I would stay for several hours, during which time I would do a taped interview. I used the tape because it proved less distracting than writing notes and people said they were happy to be recorded. In the early days of fieldwork, I was interested to find out about the lifestories of the particular people and also wanted to build up a general picture of mission culture in Calabar. However, after I had been to Calabar and had met many people that were also known to those in Scotland, the interviews focused upon particular themes that I wanted to follow up. In later interviews I focused more upon the role of education in the mission and the interaction between the mission and the colonial government. I also found that people were willing to share more information with me the more familiar I became with the churches in Calabar. After the interview I would stop the tape recorder and there would usually be further conversation about the mission, parts of which I would write down when I returned home.

While anthropology 'at home' (Jackson 1987) led me to examine my own place in the research¹³, the missionaries' life histories also cast in doubt the concept of a monolithic home 'culture'. The life stories that the missionaries related to me in Scotland had largely occurred in another country, for missionaries were migrants, who had settled in another culture as permanent residents with their families. Some said that on returning to Scotland often after some twenty years in Calabar, they felt 'out of place'. Many had been absent from many of the social occasions in their own wider families. The

¹³ In one sense I was doing anthropology 'at home', for the fieldwork was being done in Britain, researching British missionaries, however the Anglican Church I was familiar with differed from the Presbyterian churches I was researching. The generalised concept of 'British culture' subsumes complex differences, including the differences between Anglican and Presbyterian mission culture.

family photograph albums that I was shown were full of pictures of the people in Calabar but also included photographs from Scotland showing family events from which they had been absent, and this absence could be upsetting for people to recount. The migration that overseas mission demanded meant that the exile was a social exile from kin at home at the same time as joining a new community.

I also sometimes would sense a wariness about how I would represent the missionary work in Calabar. Several missionaries stated that they were aware that the mission work was no longer considered as favourably as it once had been and that missionaries were represented as the epitome of Western European colonialism, and subject to charges of arrogance, insensitivity and cultural imperialism. While several missionaries were frank about the mistakes of the mission, they were also proud of the benefits of mission education and health provision, and of the close co-operative links they had forged with the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.

Fieldwork in Calabar

I had first travelled to Calabar in November 1991, before I started the research project. I went to meet staff in the history department of the University of Calabar with whom I discussed my interest in an ethnographic study of contemporary views of Presbyterian mission history. The visit meant that before I left to do fieldwork for the thesis I had a basic familiarity with the layout of the city centre and I had arranged to be affiliated to the University of Calabar during my stay in Nigeria. However, when I returned to Calabar to start the research in December 1993, I found the university in a state of flux and uncertainty. By early 1994 the University closed when the staff went on strike in protest against the annulment of the results of the 1993 Presidential election. The university remained closed for most of the

eighteen months I spent in Calabar. The eighteen months of fieldwork in Calabar were framed by the very unstable political and economic conditions in south-eastern Nigeria between 1993-5, as the Federal Government confronted internal and external opposition to the authority of the State¹⁴.

I started doing fieldwork in Calabar in December 1993, one month after the reinstatement of the military government under General Sani Abacha. Throughout 1994 economic conditions worsened considerably. By July/August 1994 trade unions in the oil industry were on strike and a main national oil refinery at Port Harcourt dropped production levels. There were oil shortages and by August 1994 it was very difficult to obtain petrol. Long queues of motorcycles trailed the few oil tankers that drove into Calabar. The only permanent sources of petrol were that sold at extremely high prices on the black market. Later, queues also started for kerosene, which was the common cooking fuel in the city. The worsening economic situation meant that State government institutions were having trouble paying employees their salaries, so primary and secondary schools, hospitals and local government offices were often closed. The inhabitants considered that the political and economic condition of Calabar was often decided by the external forces, either the global oil industry or the military regime at Federal Government in Abuja. Many people's hopes for economic regeneration in the near future rested upon the proposed Taiwanese investment in an Export Processing Zone (EPZ) and the possibility that the Bakassi Peninsula would become an oil producing part of Cross River State.

The political crisis had a significant impact upon how I did the fieldwork in Calabar. Firstly, many people were markedly reticent to discuss political issues beyond the general complaints about the 'state of the country' and the

¹⁴Internal opposition to the State came from Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) in Rivers State. Nigeria was contesting the ownership of the Bakassi Peninsula with Cameroon.

'corruption of politicians'. This reluctance to discuss political issues made me cautious about the topics that I introduced during interviews. Secondly, in the general climate of guarded political opinion, the outspoken views of certain Pentecostalist leaders and some members of the *Obong's* Council were conspicuous. Their public denouncements the corruption of politicians were unusual and this shaped the course of the research. I became aware of the impact that Pentecostals could exercise through claiming a religious authority to address the corruption of government.

In Calabar I stayed at a guesthouse within a small compound, with a garden in the centre, which was surrounded by guestrooms on two sides. On the far side of the compound there was a covered area which was hired out for parties, meetings and other social functions. There was also a kitchen where food was prepared by the staff and a small bar where drinks and food were served. The poor economic conditions meant that the guesthouse had few other guests and was often very quiet. Most of their guesthouse business was done through letting out the covered area to people organising social events whose guests then bought drinks and food from the bar. The social events were often held by different self-help groups and traders organisations such as 'Club 25' and the 'Cross River State soft drinks sellers' alliance'. Around six people ran the guesthouse, the manager Micah and his wife Rebecca, and usually about four other people of different ages between seventeen and thirty. The staff managed the guesthouse, cleaned the rooms, did the laundry, cooked food and worked in the bar. The staff would start at about 6.30 a.m. and the last shift would finish around 10.30 p.m. when the nightwatch would go on duty. Because there were not many guests there was usually very little work for the staff to do, and not many chances for them to gain tips to supplement their small incomes. So often the staff were at their posts, but with plenty of free time to talk.

During the time I stayed in the guesthouse with my husband, the people who worked there became an important part of our lives. I felt that we established a trusting relationship that endured throughout our stay and which still continues, through letters, gifts and my husband's return visits. As we were staying at the guesthouse for a long time and paid a lower rent, we cooked and cleaned our own room. However, the economic disparity between us and the staff was so great that, far from being seen as 'fair', the arrangement was seen as a loss of potential income for the staff and so throughout the time we lived there we 'dashed' the staff frequently, buying drinks, giving lifts on the motorbikes we owned, and larger presents of money at holidays and in times when they faced particular family crises.

The staff at the guesthouse were interested in the research I was doing and I often discussed the places where I had attended church services, and people I had met. They enjoyed my interest in the masquerades that used to come along the street and would always fetch me to see them go by. I accepted invitations from Micah, the manager, and his wife, Rebecca to attend their church and their village meetings when they were held in Calabar. However, I never interviewed the guesthouse staff in a formal sense nor did I pursue detailed discussions about research during our conversations. Although I would have been interested to learn more about their lives, the daily social contact that we had demanded that we afford each other a social distance. Doing an interview would have felt, certainly on my part, both strangely formal but at the same time, too invasive of privacy. The staff at the guesthouse were not then informants, and we enjoyed daily good-humoured relations as friends. However, 'friend' is a difficult term to define cross-culturally (Rabinow 1977, Hendrey 1993), containing Western assumptions of egalitarian relationships that are in conflict with the huge economic disparities that exist between researcher and local people in sub-Saharan Africa. The word 'friend' in Calabar encompassed expectations of mistrust

as well as loyalty¹⁵. The closeness that was built up in our relationships with staff at the guesthouse was expressed in the language of kinship. We were called 'auntie' and 'uncle' by the younger staff, and the manager called us by our first names, while we addressed people using their first names.

Research sites: The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria and the Pentecostal ministries

The bulk of the research in Calabar was carried out with people who attended the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria (PCN) and different Pentecostal ministries. The research that I had done with the missionaries in Scotland shaped the way that I started doing fieldwork among Presbyterians in Calabar. Scottish missionaries had described the schools and houses where they lived and worked, many of which were still there. I had been told about people and asked to take letters and gifts, tasks which facilitated a friendly start to my research project and put me in touch with members of the Presbyterian church whom I later interviewed. There was a sense of familiarity in encountering people who knew the place from which I had just arrived, for several people had studied at Edinburgh University or attended Presbyterian meetings in Edinburgh.

There were thirteen parishes within the Calabar Presbytery when I started fieldwork, with ten parishes headed by male ministers and three by women¹⁶. Of these parishes, I decided to focus the research at Duke Town parish. As I discussed at the start of the chapter, Duke Town Church was the site of the debates about the influence of Pentecostalism in the PCN. It was also the parish that was considered most traditional in Calabar by

¹⁵A popular car sticker in Calabar read, 'I don't trust my friends, even you'.

¹⁶Ischie, Henshaw Town, Akim Qua, Hope Waddell, Big Qua, Odukpani Road, Duke Town, Old Town, Ikot Inim, Efut Ekondo, Esim Ufot, Akpabuyo, Garden Street.

Pentecostals both inside and outside the PCN. When I started doing fieldwork at Duke Town the division between the traditional members of the session and the new minister, Reverend Terty Onoh, who advocated Pentecostalism, was apparent. Like the outgoing minister at Duke Town, the Reverend Ukeagbu, Reverend Terty Onoh, called himself 'born-again' and promoted new religious practices such as healing, and speaking in tongues, which had previously not been seen at Duke Town. This view contrasted with that of the elders I met at the Session. I was asked to describe my research topic to the Duke Town Session, where I outlined by interest in the history of the Presbyterian mission as this was perceived in Calabar in the 1990s. The elders expressed an interest in the research and several offered to lend me books on Presbyterian history by the Scottish missionaries and were keen to tell me their own experiences of the mission in the 1930s-40s. Elders in the Duke Town Session shared an interest in Presbyterian history and were keen to strengthen links between Scotland and Calabar, particularly because the church was preparing for the centenary celebrations of the mission school in 1995 and the 150th anniversary of the mission's arrival in Calabar in 1996. The Session emphasised both the part played by the Presbyterian church in the Christian history of Calabar, and that Duke Town Church was the oldest Christian church in the city.

The research at Duke Town Parish also encompassed the wider social lives of the people who were members of the congregation. I visited people at their homes and attended social events. Prominent among these social events were the traditional ceremonies I was invited to by Presbyterians. In the course of research within the PCN I met several elders who were also holders of traditional political titles, chieftaincies, *ekpe* titles and *etubomship*. The history of the establishment of the Presbyterian Church in Calabar is closely bound up with the Efik traders who donated land and protection to the Scottish missionaries in the nineteenth century. The debates between the 'traditional' and born-again Presbyterians were

particularly apparent in disputes over how mission history should be represented at the events that were organised to commemorate the history of the PCN. Through contacts I made within the PCN I carried out a series of interviews with members of the *Etubom's* Council and other staff at the *Obong's* Palace. On recommendations from these people I then met other Efik who were rarely at church but who considered themselves to be members of the PCN. I also attended several events at the *Obong's* Palace, such as the 1994 Calabar Festival.

Many born-again Presbyterians told me that they also went to Pentecostal ministries during the week and I was often invited to go with them. I was interested in the most recently formed ministries as I wanted to focus upon the concerns of the revival occurring in the early 1990s. Most people dated the start of this revival had emerged after the tours organised in Calabar and other parts of West Africa in the mid-1980s by prosperity preachers from the United States, and the prosperity literature that was distributed in their wake. After visiting many different ministries I selected five which highlighted the key aspects of the two Pentecostal doctrines popular in Calabar, the holiness and prosperity gospels. My fieldwork was carried out mainly at five born-again ministries in Calabar, Intercessors Bible Mission, Greater Revival Ministry, Liberty Gospel Ministry, Overcomers Bible Mission, and the Descendants of Israel Ministry, although I attended services and carried out interviews at many other ministries. Liberty Gospel Ministry preached the holiness gospel, while IBM, Descendants of Israel Ministry, Greater Revival Ministry, and Overcomers Bible Mission all preached the prosperity gospel. I selected more ministries preaching the prosperity gospel because new churches being formed in the 1990s mainly were prosperity ministries. Two of the five ministries were founded and led by women preachers, reflecting the growing participation of women in the Pentecostal movement in the 1990s. The five ministries also encompass a wide range of participants who differ in their social and economic identities. The diversity of the social

backgrounds of the participants enabled me to explore the way that social identities were negotiated in the ministries. I decided to focus upon more than one ministry for two reasons. Firstly the case studies illustrate common aspects of organisation and shared practices among the ministries. People moved between different Pentecostal ministries very frequently and going along to a newly opened ministry to assess the relative 'power' of the preacher was a common practice. The existence of what Meyer has termed a 'cultural complex' of doctrine shared by Pentecostal ministries, such as Holy Spirit baptism, glossolalia and deliverance ritual, meant people could attend different ministries and still find services familiar. Secondly, the case studies also highlight points of difference between ministries. Some doctrinal differences had emerged in Calabar concerning the 'prosperity gospel' and there were also differences between the economic wealth of each ministry and the social identities of the participants. The differences between the ministries were often emphasised by members, other Pentecostal ministries being said to be 'weaker in spiritual power' or 'becoming corrupt' or 'losing followers'. The fact that 'denominationalism is regarded as sinful' in the Pentecostal movement (Meyer 1998:321) was offset by the ambitions of participants in particular ministries to institutionalise their church.

The main research method used was participant-observation. I went along to services and social events at the ministries and I often met up with people at their houses. There was no central organisation that co-ordinated the work of all Pentecostal ministries¹⁷ which could grant me permission to do the research, so instead I approached each ministry separately. Many ministries have the institutional status of 'incorporated' churches allocated by the Federal Government when they fulfil the legal requirement to register in

¹⁷The Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) had a branch in Calabar, but only included those ministries that had formalised their institutions. Many other ministries and fellowships existed that had never belonged to the PFN.

order to claim tax-free status. Pentecostal ministries are often known as 'incorporated' churches by members of the mission founded churches¹⁸. New Pentecostal ministries appeared frequently¹⁹. In many cases I was introduced to the pastor by a member of the ministry who had invited me to go along to their church with them. Pentecostalist ministries encourage members to 'witness' by seeking to encourage friends to become born-again and by bringing potential new members to the church. Both pastors and followers were, at first meeting, usually insistent that I should join the church and become born-again. I stated frankly that I did not want to join the ministry. This decision was a barrier to participation in some events held at the ministries, but the debates that sometimes arose from such discussions did highlight the processes involved in incorporation into the church.

The importance placed upon participation in the churches and the resistance to observation meant that both Pentecostal and anthropological forms of knowledge are questioned in fieldwork; 'both the anthropologists and their interlocutors challenge the hegemony of their attitudes towards each other's production of (scientific and religious) knowledge' (Van Dijk 1996:247)²⁰. This was a divide that was recognised by pastors in Calabar. At one of the Pentecostal ministries I had been given permission by the pastor to interview people after the service. At the end of the service the pastor announced that anyone who wanted to take part could speak to me, but they should remember that my interpretation of what they said was not informed by 'the Spirit'. Fieldwork in Pentecostal fellowships highlighted the contradictions between the critical approaches of anthropologist, and in

¹⁸ New ministries have to be registered under The Companies and Applied Matters Decree No. 1 (1990 Part C). To register, the ministry send a name and a list of trustees to the Registrar of Corporate Affairs Commission in Abuja.

¹⁹ The proliferation of born-again ministries was being researched by Essien Offiong, University of Calabar.

²⁰ Van Dijk found Pentecostals in Malawi angered when he placed inverted commas around their descriptions of 'inspiration of the Spirit'. They questioned how he could write about the ministry without reference to the workings of the Holy Spirit (1996:248).

particular the problematic assumptions of the methodology of participant-observation. Participation in the service was actively encouraged by the pastor and the other people in the ministry. I felt that the participation was considered by many people to be part of the way they defined Pentecostalism. In contrast, observation was perceived as hostile and 'academic' and was considered to introduce a scepticism into the fellowship that was contrary to fostering the experience of Spirit Baptism during the service.

On the other hand, to a Western academic audience, a research project on Pentecostalism that did not set out to replace literal with symbolic interpretations, would often be considered to lack the insight necessary for a sociological understanding. Doing fieldwork in the Pentecostal ministries required a long process of negotiation in which I had to make explicit my role as a social science researcher. Through this process of negotiation I understood both the social process by which Pentecostals seek to incorporate new members into the fellowship, and also the way secular and spiritual knowledge was represented by pastors.

In-depth interviews were also conducted with different people at the ministries. By attending services at many different ministries and socialising informally with participants I widened my circle of friends at the ministries. I would often do interviews with friends at their houses. The interviews would be taped and lasted about an hour. During these conversations it was possible for people to reflect upon their participation in the church in a more personal and informal setting. Also by being in the house, it was possible to extend the discussion to incorporate the wider social life of the person and their family situation. Often my visits would be reciprocated and people would come to visit me. Such visiting provided numerous opportunities for informal discussion. I interviewed many Pentecostals in such a way, encompassing people of different ages, ethnic affiliation and gender. There

was a difference between interviews with pastors who were in these cases also the founders of the ministries, and interviews with followers. Pastors were always very articulate people who were both experienced and talented in putting forward their opinions and beliefs. They had a large audience for their views, and exerted spiritual authority through sermons, and the demonstration of 'spiritual gifts' of healing and prophecy, as well as through publishing tracts and doing research projects on theological topics.

All the interviews were carried out in English, which was the language that predominated in the services of Pentecostalist ministries in Calabar. Many pastors stated that the use of English was an indication of education and social ambitions appropriate for what Pastor Archibong termed an 'elitic' ministry. Born-again pastors also stated that they preferred to preach in English in the ministry services, rather than a local language, because English was considered to be outside particular local cultures²¹. When the pastor and the follower did share an indigenous language, that language was often used in 'deliverance' to 'cast out demons'. When I went to interview pastors I often had to wait outside their offices and sometimes overheard the 'deliverance' sessions going on inside in partially in English and partially in Efik or Ibibio. In such situations I would later speak to people who had also been present and ask them about what had been said²².

I also carried out a questionnaire survey. I decided to do the questionnaire survey to complement what I was learning from both the one-to-one interviews and from participant observation in the ministries²³. I also wanted

²¹ As I discuss in chapter two, there were two indigenous languages spoken in Calabar. Efik was the language of the ten per cent of the population from which the 'traditional' elite was drawn. Migrants spoke Ibibio language, which is understood by Efik speakers, or Igbo. In addition to the indigenous speakers of Qua, and speakers of Bekwarra and Itigidi, languages spoken by the indigenes of northern Cross River State.

²² Before going to Calabar studied Efik and gained a basic familiarity with the language, but my knowledge of the language was not extensive enough to conduct long interviews.

²³ A copy of the questionnaire is provided in Appendix I.

to find out more about the range of different people in the congregation and knew that I could incorporate more people into the project that way. I started the questionnaire survey by focusing upon ten initial respondents from each of the Pentecostal ministries I had selected as research sites. The exception was the Descendants of Israel Ministry where a questionnaire survey was not carried out. I had become involved in research at Descendants of Israel Ministry at a later stage in the project, through the contacts with Afiong and Mary at IBM. I found out more about other people in the ministry through interviews and conversation, but my interest in Descendants of Israel Ministry was focused largely upon events in Afiong and Mary's lives.

I distributed the questionnaires to ten people in each of the ministries that I was focusing upon. I arranged for the questionnaires to be distributed widely in the ministries. Some questionnaires I gave out myself, or passed to friends to give to people that they knew. I also asked the leaders of the ministries and church stewards to assist me with the distribution and collection some of the questionnaires. Through involving other people in the distribution of the questionnaires I gathered a diverse group of respondents, many of whom were people whom I did not already know. I drew up a questionnaire in English because this was the language used in the services. After the initial distribution of questionnaires, I handed out the same questionnaire to other people in the same churches. The responses from these later participants could then be set alongside the results of the initial surveys and a broader picture of the participants at the ministries was built up.

The survey consisted of twenty-five questions that encompassed four broad areas of interest. Firstly I wanted to extend my knowledge of the social situations of people at the Pentecostal ministries. To this end I asked six biographical questions that dealt with issues such as people's age, gender, occupation, place of birth and ethnic affiliation. Secondly, I wanted to find

out about the person's involvement with their particular Pentecostal ministry. In the third section I asked about people's perceptions of traditional religion and traditional institutions in Calabar. I included a question about the coronation of the Efik *Obong* in Duke Town Presbyterian Church, which I thought would elicit responses about the relationship between the PCN and the traditional institutions. In the last section I wanted to find out about the way that the Presbyterian and Pentecostal churches were compared. I asked people about their opinion of the legacy of the Scottish mission in Calabar.

I had done a quite a few months of fieldwork before I drew up the questions that were to be used in the survey. This meant I was able to include specific issues that had emerged as pertinent themes during previous interviews. I could then consider the information I gathered in light of what I had heard and seen in the ministries myself. I was also able to consider how far the responses given to the questions asked in the survey fitted with those that I had gathered from conversations and interviews. Once I had read through the completed questionnaires I returned to do further interviews with some of the respondents.

I made several trips both to the rural areas surrounding Calabar and to other urban areas in southern Nigeria. These trips helped me to understand the place Calabar occupied within the south-east region and the nation. Presbyterianism continues to be associated with eastern Nigeria and Calabar is recognised throughout Nigeria as the historical origin point of Presbyterianism. The mission took Presbyterianism throughout the rural areas of the present day Cross River State, establishing schools and starting small local churches as far as Biase, Akpabuyo and Biakpan. Many people resident in urban Calabar frequently travel back to their villages to attend family meetings or ceremonies. In contrast, born-again Christianity remains

a predominantly urban phenomenon²⁴, and becoming born-again was associated with joining the modern, urban economy. In rural areas born-again ministries are a very rare sight, and rural areas remain dominated by the 'orthodox' mission denominations and, around Calabar, by the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star²⁵.

When born-again ministries in Calabar established new branches outside the city, these branches were in the urban areas of the neighbouring Akwa Ibom State, rather than in the rural hinterland of Cross River State. In Port Harcourt and Lagos there were very large Pentecostal ministries, and these organisations provided the models to which many Pentecostal pastors in Calabar said they aspired. Among southern Nigerian urban centres, Calabar was represented as a traditional and historic centre with a stagnant economy that was stultified by witchcraft and demons. Perspectives on Calabar from beyond the city contextualised the concern expressed by born-again people in Calabar that there was a need to oppose the predominance of Efik tradition and to revive the economy of the city.

Thesis summary

In this chapter I have introduced the main themes of the thesis and presented an overview of the theoretical approaches and the case studies that I use to explore these themes. In chapter two I describe Calabar and its inhabitants. I outline the geography and economy of the city and describe the social and political institutions of the indigenous Efik, Efut and Qua people. I describe how the indigenous cosmology, and traditional religious practices underwrite the authority of many local social and political institutions. I

²⁴ Although several ministries in Calabar, such as the Overcomers Bible Mission, did run 'rural outreach' projects.

²⁵ An independent church founded in Calabar in the 1950s.

examine the social relations between the indigenes and those people from the hinterland who have settled in Calabar, showing how the transatlantic slave trade and colonial politicisation of ethnic difference has informed social relations between the Ibibio and the Efik. I then examine the history of the Pentecostal churches in Calabar from the first holiness Pentecostal churches in 1930s to the prosperity gospel in the 1990s. I focus on Pentecostal institutions started in the 1990s. These recent changes are set in the context of research completed on religious organisations in Calabar in the 1970s and 1980s by Hackett (1989) and Savage's study of traditional offices in the 1980s (1985).

Contemporary religious affiliations in Calabar and their relation to political institutions are contextualised through an examination of the culture and history of the Scottish Presbyterian mission established in the city in 1846. In chapter three I examine the specific cultural context in which the mission was formed in Scotland. I show how Scottish Presbyterianism addressed Church and State in a way that set them apart from many other British missionaries. In chapter four examine the mission culture that was established in Calabar. Through drawing upon archival sources and interviews with returned missionaries who worked in Calabar, I show how the mission was situated in relation to institutions of colonial government and indigenous authority. I show how, at different points in its history, the mission was represented as both a 'traditional' and 'modern' institution by colonial government. The chapter provides accounts of the patronage that was received by the mission from indigenous 'traditional' institutions, including the *ekpe* society. Opposition to this patronage forms an important part of the Pentecostal critique of aspects of the Presbyterian Church.

In the next four chapters I provide an ethnographic examination of different Pentecostal ministries in Calabar. In chapters five and six I focus upon the social interactions between people within the ministries. In chapter five I

discuss the social and economic contexts of people who participated in four selected Pentecostal ministries. I examine how differences in gender, ethnicity, age and occupation influenced the way people participated in the urban economy. Within the ministries, a social arena emerged in which people could pursue concerns with education, leadership and financial management skills that were restricted in the state and commercial domains. I argue that the egalitarianism of the ministries was, in daily social interactions, crosscut by social hierarchies based on gender, ethnicity, age and education. In chapter six I discuss the concern with spiritual attack and deliverance shown by Pentecostals. I examine in greater depth the social and economic position and extended family networks of several Pentecostals, showing the different ways that indigenes and migrants approached the indigenous cosmology. The concern for deliverance was often cited as the reason why people left one ministry and joined another. I examine the process of decision making by two people who decided to leave one ministry and join another.

In chapters seven and eight I examine the ways in which the Pentecostal movement has exerted an influence beyond the boundaries of the ministries. Pentecostal practices and organisational structures have been partially adopted by parishes in the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria. In chapter seven I focus upon debates in Duke Town parish over the impact of the born-again movement. The historical ties between the Presbyterian mission and traditional Efik institutions have made many people in Calabar consider the Presbyterian Church as an 'Efik church'. A broad group of Presbyterians, known as 'traditionalists' were opposed to the influence of the Pentecostal movement, while a group of 'born-again' Presbyterians supported the changes. The tensions between 'traditional' and 'born-again' Presbyterians are explored through the analyses of two events that occurred in 1995. The first was the destruction of a tree on the Old Town headland in January 1995. The second was a debate over the presence of the masqueraders of the

ekpe society at the centenary celebrations of the Presbyterian mission school, the Hope Waddell Training Institute in March 1995. In chapter eight I examine the way that Pentecostals addressed political institutions in Calabar. Different ministries did perceive themselves to share a common opposition to the institutions of 'traditional' government, based upon indigenous cosmology. I show how different ministries articulated their opposition to traditional institutions, discussing the impact of the ideas of prosperity and deliverance. In chapter nine I summarise the thesis. I review the changes that the research project has documented within religious movements in Calabar. The main themes that run throughout the thesis are summarised.

Plate 1.

The Calabar Festival, The *Obong*'s Palace, December 1994.



Chapter Two Calabar

Introduction

In this chapter I describe Calabar and the people who inhabit the city. I show how the social relations between the indigenes and migrants who have settled in the city have been influenced by the construction and politicisation of ethnic difference in colonial and post-colonial Calabar. Ajulo (1995) has noted that there was a rise in sub-nationalist movements since 1993 and in Calabar definitions of ethnicity were key question of debate. I then place the Pentecostal ministries discussed in the thesis in the context of other religious organisations in the city. I conclude with a discussion of the ministries in the most recent Pentecostal 'revival' and the extent to which the holiness and prosperity gospels informed the new Pentecostal ministries¹. The studies by Savage (1985) and Hackett (1989) have particular value for understanding the social and religious setting in Calabar from which the Pentecostal of the 1990s has emerged.

Geography and economy

Calabar is situated in the far south-east of Nigeria at latitude of 04 57' north and a longitude of 08 20' east about twenty-five miles from the international border with Cameroon. The landscape of the region is dominated by the Cross River, which rises in the Cameroon Republic and reaches the Atlantic Ocean eight miles south of the city. The Cross River divides into numerous tributaries, one being the Calabar River bends sharply westwards as it reaches the Old Town part of Calabar, where the shoreline undulates

¹ The locations of the churches are indicated on the map in Appendix V.

between high cliffs and 'beaches' at the waterside. From the cliffs it is possible to see a long way across the low-lying mangrove forest swamps that lie in the rivers and creeks to the west and south, while the east of the city is bounded by the Qua River. The climate is equatorial with heavy rainfall between May and October and a dry season between November and April. During December the harmattan winds bring cooler weather. Around Calabar bush and forested areas, have been cleared for farming by small cultivators who produce palm oil, cassava, yam, bitter leaf and bananas. The soil is red and sandy with few rock outcrops and much farmland has been lost to the erosion that has followed deforestation. Fishing is also an important part of the local economy and small temporary fishing settlements line the riverbank opposite Calabar.

Calabar is the capital of the administrative division of Cross River State, which was created in 1976 and has a population of around 2.6 million people. In 1994-5 Cross River State was bordered by Akwa Ibom State to the south-west, Imo State and Anambra State to the to the west, Benue State to the north and the Republic of Cameroon to the east. In 1987 the territory of Cross River State was divided and the hinterland to the west of the Cross River became Akwa Ibom State with a state capital at Uyo. By 1993 Cross River State contained the eight Local Government Areas of Calabar, Odukpani, Obubra, Ikom, Ogoja, Obudu, plus Ugep which was added in 1989² and Akpabuyo in 1993³. Calabar has a population of 400,000⁴. The city is divided into several 'towns' (*obio*) that together make up the metropolitan area. Creek Town is the oldest settlement and is situated on a creek between the Calabar River and the Cross River about ten minutes upriver from the main part of Calabar. Henshaw Town, Duke Town,

² At the time of fieldwork there were thirty-one states in the Federation of Nigeria.

³ A local government area is an autonomous unit, responsible for collecting tax and providing services.

⁴ This figure comes from the Cross River State Population records from the census of 1991. Distributed by the Statistics Division at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Calabar.

Cobham Town and Old Town form one conurbation containing Efik and Efut settlements and the Qua towns are in the north-west of the city. Until the early twentieth century the different Efik and Qua towns were clan settlements (Savage 1985:55), but migration and the commodification of land increasingly means people live throughout the city and residence is decided by rents and availability.

A large part of the city's economy rests upon its role as an administrative centre and regional market centre. There are government buildings throughout the city and on a headland is the State compound of the incumbent Military Administrator. A new State Secretariat building was constructed in the late 1980s on the Highway leading to the north of the city and which co-ordinates the work of ten government ministries⁵. State employees enjoyed access to accommodation on the large Cross River State Housing Estate, known as 'state housing', which lay to the north-east of the Secretariat. The Federal Government has built the eastern Naval Ports Authority at Duke Town and the Harbour Village housing estate for employees. Calabar is a market centre for agricultural produce and other trade goods from the hinterland and throughout Nigeria. The economy of Cross River State is mainly agricultural and traders transport produce for sale at the markets. In the town centre, Bogobiri has become the Hausa speaking neighbourhood where traders from the north sell vegetables, rice, groundnut oil and meat as well as trading in foreign exchange. The mosque is located in Bogobiri. The other large trading areas of the town are Watt Market and the surrounding streets which are dominated by Igbo traders who carry out most of the trade in vehicles, spare parts and household electrical equipment like fridges, cookers and stereos.

⁵ Finance and Economic Planning, Commerce and Industry, Education, Health, Works and Transport, Information, Land, Surveys and Town Planning, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Justice, and Social Development, Youth and Sports.



Many inhabitants told me that Calabar was a 'civil service' town with a 'stagnant' economy in which nobody was 'really progressing'. People often looked back to a period of prosperous trade in the past. Between the 1920s and 1960s the export of palm oil had been at its height in the south east (Martin 1988:138). Calabar was a busy port up until the 1960s. In the 1990s, there was a sense of unrealised potential and a desire for further investment by foreign companies or the Federal Government. Some industries had been set up in the town. Raw forestry materials are processed in the Serom Wood timber yards and there are several paperbag factories in the north of the city. On the riverside in Old Town the CALCEMO concrete factory and a flourmill had been built but neither was very productive in 1994-5. Many people thought that the redevelopment of the port promised economic expansion in the future. Upriver from the city centre the State and Federal Governments had earmarked a site for an Export Processing Zone (EPZ) to be set up with Nigerian and Taiwanese investment. At the EPZ goods would be imported to be packaged in Calabar, where costs were lower, and then exported to overseas markets. However, many people felt Calabar was economically marginalised within Nigeria for, while other urban centres in the south experienced 'economic revival' from the oil production, the oil reserves in Cross River State had not yet been exploited⁶. Cross River State received funds from the Oil and Mineral Producing States Development Commission (OMPADEC) but not the flow of investment and business that would accompany oil extraction⁷. In 1994-5 international oil companies wanted to drill in the Bakassi Peninsula on the border with Cameroon, and the Efik were involved in substantiating claims by the Nigerian government to own the land⁸ as I discuss in a later section of this chapter.

⁶ Many oil producing areas were outside the amended 1987 boundaries of the Cross River State and are in Akwa Ibom State.

⁷ In Calabar there were few businesses associated with the oil industry.

⁸ The Bakassi Peninsula is presently territory subject to dispute, claimed by both Nigeria and Cameroon. Many people in Calabar thought oil extraction in Bakassi would boost Calabar's economy. Efik historians were assisting Federal Government to prove Efik, and hence Nigerian, claims to the Peninsula.

The oil industry has transformed relations between the Federal Government and regions in Nigeria in fundamental ways because oil revenues have been used to fund the creation of new states. Before 1967 there were three regions, each containing many ethnic groups. When there were three regions urban centres were ethnically mixed (Levin 1997:138). In 1991 there were thirty states, and in 1996 this increased again. Oil revenues were collected by Federal Government and distributed. Since the creation of small states, especially in the east, 'cities are becoming more ethnically homogenous' (1997:138). Many Ibibio people left Calabar and returned to the mainly Ibibio Akwa Ibom State when it was founded in 1987. There have been demands for a Calabar State that would include the Calabar urban area, Akpabuyo and Odukpani local government areas. The small states are not able to function as independent economic units, as they are too small. Instead ninety per cent of state revenue comprises of oil revenues sent from the Federal Government. Watts has argued that such is the importance of Federal oil revenues that relations between the states and the Federal Government are characterised by 'a mixture of political negotiation and political compliance with the centre'. Within the State 'ethnic identities dominated by patronage and clientism, mobilise to gain petrodollars from the centre' (Watts 1997:42).

The creation of the new states was said by Federal Government to bring the people in the new states 'closer to government' (Levin 1997:139), however, in a military regime the elite paramount leaders have become brokers with the State Administration and this has led to disputes. This has created suspicions among the inhabitants of Calabar that the leaders of the indigenous ethnic groups have privileged links with the Federal Government. There were also disputes among members of the traditional councils about whether certain people were fostering links with government

officials. This concern with corruption in local government is also addressed by the members of the Pentecostal ministries.

Efik social organisation

The three indigenous ethnic groups in Calabar, the Efik, the Efut and the Qua peoples make up about thirty per cent of the population of the city.⁹ The Efik, Qua and Efut all originated outside Calabar, although the date of the migration of each group is the subject of controversy and debate which I discuss below. The Efik have the largest population of all three ethnic groups, accounting for about four fifths of the total indigenous population. The Efik were fishermen who migrated to Calabar but first made temporary settlements amongst the Igbo and the Ibibio. The first recorded Efik settlement in Igboland was at Ututu, after which they settled at Umuahia where they became known as Iboku (Akak 1986:28). The next settlement was at Ibom, also an Igbo area. Twelve Efik clans migrated from Ibom to the Ibibio settlement of Uruan where they became known as the Efik for the first time, the name is said to be derived from the Ibibio verb, '*fik*' to oppress (Aye 1967:24). The two apical ancestors of the Efik, Atai Iboku and Ekpo Ibanga Nkanta, never lived in Calabar but lived during the migration period. Atai Iboku died on migration to Uruan, while in Uruan an Efik princess of the Atai lineage married an Ibibio man, Ekpo Ibanga Nkanta, and they had a son called Effiom Ekpo. When the Efik left the Ibibio settlement of Uruan, seven Efik clans formed the first Efik settlement at Ikpaene, which

⁹ Information about ethnic groups is no longer collected in the national census so there were no recent official statistics available about the relative population sizes of each ethnic group. Figures were last collected in 1963. The statistics for Calabar urban area were as follows, Efik 28,030 (including Qua and Efut), Ibibio 73,909, Igbo 50,778, Annang 21,475 and Ejagham 1,990. The number of Igbo people living in Calabar fell after the 1967-1970 Civil War. The number of Ibibio people fell when Akwa Ibom State was created in 1987. Today the Efik, Qua and Efut make up about thirty per cent of the population.

several generations later moved to Creek Town. In Creek Town three children were born to Effiom Ekpo, Nsa, Edem, Okoho, while Atai Iboku had four descendants, Oku Atai, Ema Atai, Adam Atai and Atai Ukpung. The descendants of these children form the present day seven 'royal' Efik clans, the *essien efik itiaba*, Abayen, Usuk Akpa, Enwang, Adiabo, Mbiabo, Obutong and Iboku. All Efik in Calabar can trace descent paternally or maternally to Atai Iboku or Ibanga Nkanta. Creek Town was the first Efik settlement in Calabar and was founded by Ema Eyo, son of Ema Atai. Old Town and Duke Town were formed when Effiom Ekpo's daughter Okoho gave birth to twins and was sent out of Creek Town and started settlements further down the Calabar River at Old Town (*Obutong*), Duke Town (*Atakpa*), Henshaw Town (*Nsidung*). Creek Town was the first metropolis and was only eclipsed by Duke Town after the death of King Eyo Honesty II in 1858.

The Efik social organisation is based upon a system of segmentary lineages. The first Efik fishing communities in Calabar were organised into patriarchal family units around minor lineage segments. Each family was headed by an *etinyin*, the oldest male in the patrilineage. The families were grouped within towns (*obio*) that were based upon clans. The social organisation was transformed by the slave trade when houses (*ufok*) emerged as corporate groups organised around a major lineage segment¹⁰. Each house conducted trade with the Europeans independently and selected an *etubom* to negotiate trade and co-ordinate the 'canoe system' of transport and trade networks. The title of *etubom*, formed from the Efik words *ete* (father) and *ubom* (canoe) replaced *etinyin*, and the *etubom* was selected

¹⁰ The word 'house' used to describe both the physical structure and the kin group that often corresponded to the same bounded group until the end of the nineteenth century.

both according to seniority and his skill as a trader, introducing elements of meritocracy into Efik social organisation (Savage 1985:98)¹¹.

Until the early twentieth century the population in each town (*obio*) consisted of indigenes who were clan members and were headed by a clan head (*etubom obio*) (Savage 1985:55). However, when the slave trade ended ex-slaves who had been owned by the house but not sold were absorbed into the house membership. The contemporary house (*ufok*) can be defined as a corporate kin group formed around a core group of several families of patrilineal agnates. Patrilineal ties are regarded as better lines to succession but maternal relations can also be the basis for affiliation to, and participation within, a house. Maternal relatives are considered kindly and supportive in contrast to the competition and rivalry between patrilineal relatives. People might activate claims with different houses during their lifetime using both patrilineal and maternal ties (Savage 1985:83). Only a minority of the house belongs to the 'royal core' with ties to founding ancestors. Most are 'non-descendants' known pejoratively as 'sons of slaves' who have no genealogical ties to patrilineal ancestors as they were descended from slaves incorporated into the house.

In contemporary Calabar there is a thin line between people of servile origin and the 'true descendants', the blurring brought about by the fact that the offspring of a slave and a freeborn was free (Savage 1985:190). A non-descendant could become househead or *etubom* by being asked to act as regent and then converting this to a hereditary office in the next generation (Savage 1985:191). In the early twentieth century residence after marriage tended still to be virilocal, but nowadays men and women set up house where property can be rented at an affordable price. Marriage does not sever

¹¹ Some writers, such as Savage (1985:97) and Akak (1982:283), have argued that the Efik house (*ufok*) was not a new institution. Jeffreys argued that the house was a new form of social organisation produced by the slave trade (1935:46)

the woman from her patrilineage¹² so a married woman can return to live with patrilineal relatives and retain the right to be selected as the *ibuot ufok*, head of a family sub-group within the house, or claim a share of house property. The house continues to provide people with access to shared resources such as land and money (Savage 1985:100). Income is raised by the renting of house land and the sale of produce on the land such as firewood and farm produce such as palm oil. The house provides some security for members, providing a 'bank' of material resources that can be drawn upon draw upon to meet the cost of family ceremonies such as marriages and funerals. To secure access to house resources a person has to maintain involvement in house activities, such as the monthly house meetings¹³.

The house is the social unit within which the offices of hereditary and honorary chieftaincy, and *etubomship* are vested. There are also hereditary titles in the *ekpe* secret society that 'belong' to particular families in certain houses, such as the title of *Obong Eyamba* and *Obong Ebonko* which belong to the Eyamba family in Eyamba house and the Ekpenyoung House in Creek Town respectively. Traditional offices are still considered to have high social status by many Efik, especially people in the older generations. For people who are not 'exposed' to life beyond Calabar, gaining traditional office can be a valued achievement and recognition of their status in the local community. For people who do travel elsewhere in Nigeria or overseas for education or business, taking a traditional title can provide a route for partial reintegration into the local community. Taking traditional titles also brings people into a social network that provides financial security if not

¹² The Efik often stress the fact that they 'do not sell their daughters' because they have a fixed bridewealth *Ekebe ndo*, of £12 (the amount was often also stated in pounds not naira). And it was widely said that Efik women 'do not stay long in marriage' often returning to their natal family.

¹³ Savage states that in 1982 Archibong House had one thousand members but only around one hundred of these attend the house meetings (Savage 1985:102).

enrichment. Only the *Obong* receives a State stipend for his office¹⁴, but other officeholders such as the *etubom* or *adiaha ekpe* (*ekpe* chief) gain access to funds collected in fines and from the sale of titles. Each house selects an *etubom* as house head and different houses make the selection in different ways. The most conservative houses still select according to primogeniture, choosing the most senior man in the patrilineage so in many cases there is the automatic succession of the most senior blood relative. Other houses elect the *etubom* by ballot and consider younger men in the patrilineage who have succeeded in trade or business or non-descendants (Savage 1985:174).

Government stipends ended for *etuboms* in 1980, but the office gives them recognition by State Government as a 'village chief'. The *etubom* sits on the *Etuboms'* Traditional Council and the *Obong's* Council. The *Etuboms'* Traditional Council is the body that meets when required to select the *Obong*, supervises the way the incumbent *Obong* carries out his duties, settles disputes, maintains good relations with State and Federal Government and fosters unity among the Efik (Savage 1985:178). Each house nominates two chiefs that become advisors to the *etubom* at the *Etuboms'* Council and *Obong's* Council. The *Obong's* Council is held weekly and consists of the *Obong*, a chairman, the *etuboms* and their advisors, honorary chiefs, including women who have been made honorary chiefs and the heads of integrated communities' other ethnic groups. Through the *Obong's* council, non-Efiks participate in the Efik society. However, because the *etuboms* have dual membership in both councils the *Etubom's* Council has been seen as a body able 'to monitor the influence of non-Efiks and non-descendants on crucial matters, and if necessary negate their interference' (Savage 1985:183).

¹⁴ The *Obong* still receives an allowance from the Federal government.

The *Etubom*'s Council manages the office of the *Obong* of Calabar, the paramount leader of the Efiks¹⁵. The *etuboms* supervise the funeral obsequies of the deceased *Obong* and select a successor from among their number. The office of *obongship* was shaped by mission and colonial administration in Calabar. During the nineteenth century each Efik town had an *obong* who represented all the houses in the town in trade and both the mission and the European traders became involved in selecting certain people as *obongs*. In 1902 the colonial administration restricted the *obongship* to Duke Town and Creek Town and houses who vied to appoint their candidate¹⁶. The succession of the *Obong* is still decided according to age and seniority (Savage 1985:122) but Savage notes that 'primogeniture no longer ruled supreme' in the selection and ballots are used in the *Etuboms*' Council to finalise the choice of the *Obong* elect (1985:131)¹⁷. Once a candidate is selected the *etuboms* organise and officiate at the two installation ceremonies that are held for the *Obong*.

The 'traditional' ceremony is held at the *efe asabo* shrine near the beach very early in the morning. The ceremony is not public and only witnessed by men and women in the *ndem* cult. The *Obong* is given his title by an *ndem* priestess and an *etubom* from Cobham House, part of the Otung lineage that 'owns' the *ndem* cult. During the short rite in the *efe asabo* the *Obong* wears the ceremonial regalia of the *ntinya*, a white hat with leopard's skin, an *ikpaya* staff and an *ayan* broom, all items brought by the Efik on their migration from Uruan. The *Obong* then goes to the *efe ekpe* (*ekpe* shrine) in Eyamba Square where he is conferred with authority by the head of the *ekpe* society, the *Ekpe Eyamba*. The second coronation ceremony is

¹⁵ During fieldwork the *Obong* of Calabar was *Edidem Boco Ene Mkpang Cobham V* who was crowned in an *ntinya* ceremony in 1989 and at Duke Town Church in December 1990.

¹⁶ Between 1926 and 1940 there was an interregum. After Eyo Honesty IX died in 1926 Creek Town did not have an *Obong* and in 1926 the *Obong* of Duke Town was deposed and not reinstated the year he died in 1940.

¹⁷ There are also other fixed requirements, the *Obongship* must be an *ekpe* initiate and hold *ekpe* titles. The *Obongship* also rotates between western Calabar and central Calabar.

known as the *Ananya* ceremony and takes place at Duke Town Presbyterian Church. Unlike the ceremony at the *efe asabo*, the 'Westminster coronation' at Duke Town Presbyterian Church is a very public event often attended by traditional rulers from elsewhere in Nigeria, such as the Oba of Benin. The *Obong* and his entourage parade through the town centre in a lavish procession. The crown is then presented to the presiding minister by the *etubom* who carried out the *ntinya* ceremony and the minister crowns the *Obong*.

Efik cosmology: *Abasi*, *ndem* and *ekpe*

Abasi Ibom is the supreme being of Efik cosmology and is considered to be omnipresent, on earth as *abasi isong* and in the heavens as *abasi enyong*. There is not a systematised cult connected to *abasi* and the supreme being is seen as a distant figure, the ultimate provider of life and judgement (Hackett 1989:33). *Ererimbot* is the world of the living, the word comes from the Efik verb *mbot*, meaning 'to fashion' or 'to mould' and refers to the place where people are shaped, live and eventually leave when they die¹⁸. In *ererimbot* a person is said to have two souls (*ukpong*), a human soul and a bush soul that dwells within an animal. The human soul can be extracted by people who want to do a person harm, while harm to the animal that carries the bush soul can also endanger a person's wellbeing. When a person dies they either become a ghost (*ekpo*) or an ancestor (*mbukpo*) within the *obio mbukpo* (the land of the departed)¹⁹. *Ererimbot*, the world human beings live in, is mirrored by another world called *obio ndem* (the world of spirits). *Ndem* are often represented as intermediaries between *etinyin abasi* and

¹⁸ Another term used is *unadot* from *ndat*, a visible group that means the world we see and experience.

¹⁹ In order to be counted as an ancestor a person must have lived a long, good life, completed bridewealth payments, have had a proper burial and have produced a male heir.

humans, and they are nature spirits especially associated with water, forests, springs and stones. *Ndem* are most associated with water, and the *obio ndem* is envisaged as an underwater world²⁰. From *obio ndem* the spirits are able to make visits into the human world by being born in human form. *Ndem* can be considered as individual spirits or a 'collectivity' of spirits (Hackett 1989:28). Each Efik town has an *ndem*, for example, Nsidung (Henshaw Town) is associated with *Sunko Monko*, Ikoneto with *Afia awan* and Obutong (Old Town) with *Anansa Ikang Obutong*, *Ndem Efik Iboku*, while the unity of all Efik is represented by the tutelary deity *Ndem Efik*. The libation prayer is a request for the assistance of *Abasi*, the *mbukpo* and *ndem* to prosper and protect the living and pronounces a curse upon those who wish harm to the gathering. The 'traditional' practices are concerned with incorporating the individual into the community and gathering the community together, with sanctions against those people who threaten the unity of the group.

A cult developed around *ndem* among the Efik. However, the offices in the cult have declined since the nineteenth century which 'was the high point for *Ndem Efik* as a religious institution' (Hackett 1989:28). The missionary Waddell noted that by 1847 the office of chief priest (*oku ndem*) that combined the role of priest and paramount ruler had almost ceased to exist in Calabar (Hackett 1989:29). In contemporary Calabar participation in the *ndem* cult is 'very much an individual and highly personalised experience' (Savage 1985:287). There are *ndem* priests and priestesses who still play an important part in the coronation of the *Obong*, but the cult has no organised institutions that initiate new members, regulate practices or collect consultation fees. Some priests and priestesses inherit cult membership because they are descendants of the Otung lineage in Cobham Town and Eyo Ema family in Creek Town. Other people are 'chosen' or 'possessed'

²⁰ In contrast to *mbukpo* (ancestor spirits) and ghosts (*ekpo*) who were once people on earth.

by *ndem* to join the priesthood. The role of the *awa ndem* (*ndem* specialist) can be a man or woman but is particularly associated with women. The priestess uses an oracle in private consultations to divine the cause of a person's problems. If a *ndem* is found to be responsible the priestess might recommend that the person should make a sacrifice to renew their accord with the *ndem*. *Ndem* ritual specialists also take part in the lifecycle ceremonies of women when they are put into seclusion, a practice that is now far less frequently observed because long seclusion periods interfere with the education of girls. *Ndem* priestesses also play an important part in the installation of the *Obong*.

However, outside specific ceremonies, *ndem* practices and *ndem* adherents were not seen in public in Calabar in 1994-5. The decline in public worship by members of the *ndem* cult noted by Hackett in the early 1980s has continued (1989:363). Chief Ekpenyoung from Eyo Honesty II house in Creek Town told me that fifty years ago when he was a child in Creek Town there were about fifty priestesses, but only one priestess continued to practice there in 1995. When I did meet a priestess in Calabar she was an elderly woman in her seventies who told me that she was finding it difficult to bring younger women into the cult. While younger women would often consult her in private they were unwilling to become identified with the cult in public. Indeed opposition to *ndem* was becoming very vocal in the early 1990s and in 1995 a large tree on the headland in Calabar, long associated with *Anansa Ndem* and which had been a site of public *ndem* worship in the 1970s, was destroyed in an arson attack. The destruction of the tree met with approval by many Pentecostal people who considered *ndem* practices to be 'demonic' in a debate that I discuss in chapter seven.

In contrast with the members of the *ndem* cult, adherents of the *ekpe* society had a highly visible presence in the city. The *ekpe* society had a series of 'plays' (*mbre*) performed by masqueraders the most common being *idem*

ikwo, who dresses in a raffia costume and carries a large staff in the right hand and a branch of leaves from the *oboti* tree in the left, which is used to greet initiates. The masqueraders circulate around the streets of the town at Easter and Christmas holidays, at Efik festivals, state occasions and at the marriages and funerals of *ekpe* titleholders. The distinctions between *ekpe* initiates and non-initiates become very clear when the masqueraders moved out on the street stopping traffic and passers-by and demanding payment from non-initiates before letting people pass. In the 1970s *ekpe* masqueraders had become so pervasive that they were regularly blocking the streets of Calabar climbing all over the cars that stopped in the traffic jams and demanding money from drivers. Non-initiates were 'beaten' by masqueraders if they were considered to have 'offended' the rules of the society, for example wearing trousers in the sight of the masquerade or taking photographs²¹. The violence of the masqueraders in the late 1970s led to the 'plays' being curtailed, so by 1989 such large-scale *ekpe* masqueraders on the streets of Calabar still occurred but were less aggressive to pedestrians. The *ekpe* (leopard) society is a secret society that first appeared among the Efik in the seventeenth century when the first lodges were founded (Aye 1967:70). The 'spirit of *ekpe*' is believed to emanate from the forest and is considered to be 'the messenger of *ndem*'. The *ekpe* society was not an indigenous Efik institution and is shared with the Efut and the Qua. Many people said that the society was brought by the Efut to Calabar from a village called Usak Edet in Cameroon. The story goes that the *ekpe* society had first been a women's society and was founded by a woman who saw *ekpe* in the bush and managed to carry back the sound of *ekpe* to the village. However, the woman was killed because the king said that a woman was unable to keep a secret. Before she died she called for eggs and prayed by breaking the eggs for *ndem*, now traditional practices associated with the society and an indication of the links between *ekpe* and *ndem*.

²¹ 'Ekpe Row Rocks Calabar', article in *The Drum* newspaper, February 1978.

The ordinary initiation of men and boys and the ceremonial initiation of women into the society involve a single ceremony that does not impart any secrets. It is with the initiation into the grades that the secrets are told. The ten basic grades in descending order are *eyamba*, *nyampke* (*grand ekpe*), *oku akama*, *nkanda*, *okpoho*, *ebonko*, *mbakara*, *mboko-mboko*, *mboko* and *mkpe*. There is the sub-division of 'deputy' (*isung*) within these grades, making about eighteen *ekpe* titles at present in Calabar. The *eyamba* is the ruler of all *ekpe* grades while the *ebonko* is the ruler of the five lower grades. Each grade has rules governing who is allowed to enter it and the *ekpe* chiefs (*adaidha ekpe*) decide who will be initiated to which grade. The lower grades are open to all who are prepared to pay the fees, including foreigners and 'slaves'²² but the higher grades of *eyamba*, *okopho*, *nyampke*, *oku akama* and *nkanda*, cannot admit 'slaves', that is, those people in Calabar who cannot trace their descent from the Efik freeborn families (Savage 1985:231). Some of the higher grades are associated with certain Efik houses and families and descendants inherit the right to be initiated into grades 'owned' by their family, for example *Okpoho* grade is owned by Eyo II, *eyamba* by Duke Town and *Nkanda* by Eyo III²³. Other people have to buy grades, often paying out huge sums of money and large quantities of goods such as goats, fowls and drinks to the society. Membership of the *ekpe* society is required for all high office, including the *Obongship*. Holding high grades in the society is considered very prestigious and provides an entrance into circles of power, for example, the *ekpe* society takes part in the rituals associated with the burial of the *Obong* and the *ntinya* installation of the *Obong* at the *efe ekpe*. The *Eyamba ekpe* confers authority on the *Obong* and has the authority to depose him. Holding a high-

²²These grades are often given as honours, for example Awolowo, the leader of the political party, the Action Group, was awarded an *ekpe* title.

²³ Creek Town 'bought' *ekpe* knowledge from Essien Ekpe Oku, while Duke Town bought it from the first son of Ekpe Oku (Ambo). The first two *eyambas*, Esien Ekpe Oku and Ekpenyoung Ekpe Oku, were from Creek Town but by the 1800s the *eyamba* was owned by Eyamba House.

grade title in the *ekpe* society also gives a share in the financial resources owned by the society. The land and property of members of the society is protected, both in spiritual terms and also through support in land disputes, as *ekpe* is involved in the demarcation and protection of the property of neighbours, 'safeguarded or sealed property by placing its mark' (Savage 1985:225).

The Qua and the Efut

The Qua and the Efut are the two other indigenous peoples in Calabar. The population of both groups is much smaller than the Efik and together the Efut and Qua make up about one fifth of the indigenous population. The Efut migrated from Cameroon to Calabar where they became farmers and fishermen in the southeastern part of the city and many Efut say that their migration to Calabar preceded that of the Efik. However intermarriage with the Efik has produced integration and the seven Efut clans of Abua, Ekondo, Ibonda, Ufot, Ukem, Nkpara and Ifako are situated within Efik settlements. Savage writes that 'the Efut have neither a distinct organisation nor customs...the Efik language and customs have been wholly adopted' (Savage 1985:21-2). The cultural distinctiveness of Efut and Efik are only discussed in relation to claims among the 'royal' Efut families to posts of the offices of *muri* (clan head) or *Munene* (paramount ruler) and land disputes as I discuss below. The Qua migrated from north-west Cameroon to Calabar, and claim that they arrived in Calabar in the seventeenth century before the Efut and the Efik. The Qua do not live within Efik settlements but have separate 'towns' in the north-east of the city; Big Qua Town and Akim Qua, Ikot Ansa, Ikot Omin, Odukpani, Kasuk Qua, Idudu Qua, Akim Akim and Ikpai. Each clan has a *ntoe* (clan head) and the Qua have a paramount ruler, the *Ndidem*. The Qua also have a distinct language from the Efik which is related to the Ejagham language spoken in north-east Cross River and western Cameroon.

The cultural distinctiveness of the Efik, Efut and Qua is highlighted in disputes concerning land ownership and the relative status of the paramount heads. In the treaties signed between the Qua and the British in 1878, the Qua were acknowledged as 'the original owners of the soil on which Duke Town now stands' and since that date the Qua have sought to reclaim the land. In the 1916 Beachland Case the Qua mounted a civil action against the Efiks and claimed ownership of the shore from Old Town to Henshaw Town. The government found in favour of the Qua but the Efik challenged the decision and their appeal was upheld. Debates about land ownership are particularly common between the Efik and the Efut, where Efut gifts of land to the Efik on intermarriage resulted in many cross cutting ties of ownership and competing claims. The other point of dispute concerns the status of the paramount rulers. The Efik *Obong* had been termed the *Obong* 'of Calabar' since the 1940s, a title which Efut and Qua indigenes objected to as they resented being subsumed under his authority. The 1934 Combined Native Authority put the chiefs of all the indigenous groups on an equal footing, *ntoes*, *etuboms* and *muris* (Savage 1985:24), but this parity was dismantled in 1940 when the Efik organisation *Esop Iboku* argued that the *Obong* should be elected and called 'the *Obong* of Calabar' not the *Obong* of the Efik. Up to this point the Efut and Qua had been recognised as clans under the authority of the Efik *Obong* and led by a *ntoe*²⁴ and a *muri*²⁵.

In 1978, the Traditional Rulers Edict recognised the *Ndidem* of the Quas and the *Munene* of the Efut as separate paramount rulers and awarded them stipends. However, despite the disputes that occur in Calabar over authority

²⁴The first *Ndidem* of the Qua was *Ndidem* Edim Idoma who died in 1978. Present *Ndidem* in 1994 requested that his house should be called the residence of the *Ndidem* of Calabar, so using the same title as the *Obong* of Calabar.

²⁵The 1910 Beachland Case ruled that Efuts and Efiks had separate languages and cultures, but many Efiks still claimed Efuts were Efiks. The Efut adopted the titles *Munene* and *muri* after 1910. Before the Efut had used the title *etubom* and Efut *etuboms* had sat on the *Obong's* Council.

and territory within the city, the three indigenous ethnic groups are closely bound together by their joint membership of the *ekpe* society which 'acts as a source of unity among the Efik, Efut and Qua' (Savage 1985:220). The *ekpe* society is the main indigenous authority for the settlement of territorial disputes. The head of the *ekpe* society, the *ekpe eyamba*, also exercises ultimate authority over the three paramount rulers. Savage concludes that; 'despite the antagonism in Efik-Efut-Qua relationships created by sentiments of cultural and social superiority...there are still several common elements that serve to unite them...all three consider themselves above all other groups as the indigenes of Calabar' (1985:32).

Migrants to Calabar

The English word 'indigenes' is commonly used by both the Efik, Qua and Efut to describe themselves and the word is also used by people who have settled in Calabar to refer to the original inhabitants. In Efik 'indigenous' translates as *amanaison* (lit. 'that which is undermost' or 'the foundation') or *eke obio*, (lit. 'our place'). The Efik, Qua and Efut indigenes make up about thirty per cent of the population of Calabar, while the other seventy per cent are first or second generation migrants to the city, some arriving as far back as the 1950s, but most since the Civil War ended in the 1970s. 'Migrant' was not a commonly used word in Calabar, although people did translate the English word 'migrant' as '*anwana okuk esie ke idut*, (lit. 'he earns his living in a foreign land'). Indigenes would often describe the people who had settled in Calabar using the English word 'foreigners', which has a sense of exclusivity that is absent from the Efik equivalent *esen* which also means 'guest'. Indigenes would also describe people from elsewhere by referring to their ethnic groups. These various usages had different nuances of meaning, so I use the term 'migrant' to refer to all people who settle in Calabar from elsewhere and then go on to explore the meanings attached to different ethnic group affiliations. I then examine the social relations

between indigenes and migrants in the colonial and post-colonial eras, focusing upon the relationship between indigenes and the Ibibio who were the largest migrant group making up about forty per cent of the total population of Calabar.

The Ibibio number around four million people most of whom live in the new Ibibio state of Akwa Ibom which was founded in 1987²⁶. When Akwa Ibom State was formed, many Ibibio left Calabar while others stayed on in the city, renting and buying land and property from the indigenes. Ibibio people in Calabar were prominent in the teaching and medical professions, in private business ventures and there were many Ibibio pastors in the different Christian denominations. The Efik had lived among the Ibibio during their migration to Calabar and shared genealogical and cultural ties. The Efik acknowledge that one of their two apical ancestors, Ibanga Nkanta, was the child of an Efik mother and an Ibibio father, and that the regalia and form of the *ntinya* coronation of the *Obong* originate in Uruan in Ibibioland. Efik and Ibibio languages are mutually comprehensible, with only some differences in vocabulary. Although there is no paramount ruler of the Ibibio and the clan (*ikpaisong*) is the largest unit of Ibibio social organisation, there are many points of similarity with Efik social institutions. The clan is led by the clan head (*obong ikpaisong*), who is installed in a *ntinya* ceremony very similar to that of the Efik *Obong* (Udoh 1983:132). The Ibibio clan is made up of several patrilineages called *ekpuk*, a word also used to mean lineage in Efik. The Ibibio also share similar cosmological beliefs in *ndem*, which are known as *nnem* by Ibibio people, although these are different deities from the *Ndem Efik* (Hackett 1989:28).

However, many Efik in Calabar make pejorative statements about Ibibio people. Efik historians such as Akak have argued that the Ibibio do not have

a shared cultural identity. 'They are a confederation of diverse people of diverse origin grouping together through some forces of circumstances with neither a common ancestor or language' (Akak 1981:8). Akak argues that Efik superiority rests on the fact that 'the Efik did not enslave themselves' while 'in the history of the slave trade, slaves were of Ibibio origin' (1981:9-10). Efik say that Ibibio people 'imitate' and 'copy' Efik cultural practices. The points of similarity between the Efik and Ibibio social organisation, cosmology and language were played down by Efik speakers, indeed one Efik woman I knew said in English in the presence of an Ibibio person that 'she could not understand what they were saying when they spoke Ibibio', even though the languages are mutually intelligible. Ibibio people often said they felt sensitive about saying that they were Ibibio in Calabar because they felt that the Efik 'looked down on them'.²⁷ They said they resented the 'arrogance' of the Efik, who they considered to be really 'an offshoot' of the Ibibio people.

The history of the transatlantic slave trade, when Efik middlemen profited from the sale of Ibibio slaves, informs contemporary conflicts between the Efik and Ibibio. Ibibio historians argue that Efik prosperity was built by the labour of Ibibio slaves. 'The Efik used their slaves as a commodity of trade as well as cheap labour. The wealth of the chiefs depended largely upon slave labour' (Udoh 1983:235). In 1861 the British Consul moved to a new headquarters in Calabar and treaties were signed with the Efik traders drawing the Efiks into the 1885 Oil Rivers Protectorate²⁸ and in 1900 Calabar became the seat of government for the Protectorate of Southern

²⁶ Prior to 1987 the area now Akwa Ibom State was part of Cross River State with its capital in Calabar. When the new state was formed many Ibibio migrants left Calabar to take up posts in Uyo, the Akwa Ibom State capital.

²⁷ When I carried out interviews and circulated the questionnaire I noted that some Ibibio people would not respond by stating that their ethnic group was Ibibio. Many people I knew to be Ibibio would say they were 'from Calabar', even if they had only recently settled in the city. Efik people always defined themselves as Efik.

²⁸ The Oil Rivers Protectorate was a claim over land rather than an administrative unit (Perham 1962:25).

Nigeria (Nair 1972:296). The British colonial administration considered ethnic identity to be the fundamental social identity in African society, a primary, uncontroversial and natural classification that defined and quantified territorially bounded ethnic groups (Werbner and Ranger 1996). Ethnic criteria were used to define discrete social units of local government (Nicolson 1969, Perham 1962) through 'censuses, passports, registration of births and deaths, identity cards and finger-printing' (Rouse 1995:362). Ethnic identity became politicised²⁹ as colonising states 'pressed the colonised to conceptualise and organise themselves as members of discriminable tribes or nations with clearly defined ritual and political leaders' (Rouse 1995:362). In Calabar, the Efik *Obong* of Calabar became the head of the 'traditional' government and the concept of a distinct Efik culture, first articulated by the Scottish mission, defined an entity of local government. However, the process of ethnic classification that first accorded the Efik a distinct cultural identity in the 1880s-1890s, was revised by the colonial administration after the Aro Expedition into Ibibioland in 1901-2 (Udoh 1983:306-7). Ethnographic research completed by administrators during the Aro Expedition concluded that the Efiks were originally Ibibio people who migrated to Calabar to trade with the Europeans and proclaimed themselves a distinct group (Udoh 1983:12). Jeffreys produced the first direct comparison of the Ibibio and the Efik, arguing that the Efiks were a small section of the Ibibio known as the Eburutu, who were driven out of Arochukwu when the Aro took control of the Long Juju (Jeffreys 1935:1)³⁰. Later ethnography by Forde and Jones defined the Efik as the riverain 'sub-tribe' of the Ibibio, and 'one of the smallest of the six Ibibio sub-tribes' (Forde and Jones 1954)³¹.

²⁹The argument is not that ethnic groups were 'invented' by colonialists (Saro-Wiwa 1995:190), rather the ethnic groups were defined as politicised and placed within the structures of government, and were later incorporated within Federal institutions.

³⁰ Jeffreys argues that the Ibibio were in Calabar in 1686, referred to as the 'Egbo Shary' in Barbot's documents.

³¹ There were differences between the accounts, Jeffreys argued that the Efik were an Ibibio group called *Eburutu* from Arochukwu, Forde and Jones saw the Efik as descendants of the Enyong from Uruan.

Some perceptions of cultural differences relating to economic activity were shared by the Efik and the Ibibio, for example, both Efik and Ibibio people agreed that the Efik 'did not like to work hard and perform manual labour' because they preferred 'to live off the income that they gained from renting out land and property to migrants'. The need for Efik people to become more economically active was a commonly expressed concern by the Efik in Calabar in the early 1990s. In 1994-5 the Efik were pursuing one possible source of wealth in their claim to own land in the Bakassi Peninsula where oil reserves had been located. The Federal Government were supporting the Efik claims to own Bakassi as part of a national claim on the territory, because the Efik settlement predated the formation of Nigeria. Efik historians and members of the *Obong's* Council in Calabar frequently travelled to Abuja to assist in the construction of the Federal claim to Bakassi to be presented at the International Court at the Hague. The Efik historian, E.U. Aye, defines the boundary at the start of his recent history of the Akpabuyo area that encompasses Bakassi (Aye 1994:1)³². However, it was clear that the land dispute could last for years and that the Bakassi project was not going to yield an immediate source of income.

Efik people who held high office in the *Obong's* Council or the *ekpe* society also gained income from the sale of titles. However, the sale of titles and the receipt of Government money by officeholders was causing disputes. In 1992 a number of *etuboms* left the *Obong's* Council after the *Obong* had received 'something from the Government' which the *etuboms* said he had not declared to the Council and refused to share with the *etuboms*. Some *etuboms* alleged that the *Obong* had unilaterally awarded a chieftaincy title to a man from Akpabuyo, despite opposition from *etuboms*, which had yielded further income for the Palace that was also not shared. The *etuboms*

³²Akpabuyo was settled after 1814. At the Berlin Conference the British and the Germans placed the border between their territories to the east of Bakassi (1994:33-14).

decided to sue the *Obong* in the High Court to get their share of the money, but they lost their case. By 1994-5 many *etuboms* had returned to the *Obong*'s Council³³. However, a similar controversy surrounded the 'sale' of high-ranking *ekpe* titles which Efik chiefs maintained were being sold to people who do not qualify for them. The *ekpe* society was said by critics to be greedy to earn money for the members by selling titles but in the process was devaluing the titles, which according to some, amounted to 'selling the Efik birthright' through giving status to 'foreigners' who 'did not really know Efik customs'.

The *Obong*'s Council organised the 'Calabar Festival' in December 1994 to promote Efik cultural heritage and an 'economic revival'³⁴. The *Obong* was represented as the descendant of the nineteenth century Efik rulers who were both modernisers and Christians, able to safeguard the integrity of tradition while promoting economic expansion. The Festival started with a procession from the *Obong*'s Palace to Duke Town Presbyterian Church for a service of thanksgiving for the reign of the *Obong* and the blessing of the *Obong* of Calabar and his Council. At the Palace the *Obong* called for the 'rekindling of the rich cultural heritage of the Efiks which now faces neglect as a result of the corrosive influence of modernity and serious defacement at the hands of over-zealous imitators'. At the same time there were debates about how the Efik could gain greater control of economic resources through attracting investment at the proposed Export Processing Zone (EPZ). The Efik needed to become more successful in local trade, as one Efik speaker put it, the Ibibio traders at Orok Orok Junction could make four hundred *naira* a day, whereas the Efik civil servant often waited patiently for the small pay-cheque to arrive from State Government or the rent from his tenants. Palm oil plantations owned by Efiks had been sold or rented to non-indigenes who

³³ Except several *etuboms* from Henshaw Town, Cobham Town and the Ibitam family from Creek Town, who remained critical of the *Obong*.

³⁴ This was one such occasion when the born-again language of 'revival' and 'renewal' was brought into use in other contexts.

were often making a profit selling the produce while the Efik owner received a small, fixed sum. Several Efik said they had sold their land because they were 'lazy' and preferred others to work for them and pay rent, or give a share of the crop but that they regretted the decision³⁵.

Religious movements in Calabar

Hackett in her survey of religious affiliation in Calabar in the 1980s estimates that ninety-five per cent of people in Calabar would describe themselves as Christians, 'in that they claim allegiance to a Christian related institution, undergo the Christian rites of baptism, marriage and burial and send their children to Sunday school' (Hackett 1989:361)³⁶. Hackett suggests that the Pentecostalism that was emerging during the 1970s and 1980s 'will become the most dominant and widespread type of religious expression' in Calabar (Hackett 1989:365). The expansion of the Pentecostal ministries, however, has to be set within the wider background of religious organisations in Calabar. While the Pentecostal ministries constitute the largest number of individual organisations, the Catholic Church still contains the largest recorded membership of any Christian denomination in Calabar. However, all of the 'orthodox' churches are increasingly influenced by the practices of the Pentecostal ministries.

The Presbyterian mission retained sole control of Christians in Calabar for over fifty years until other European mission denominations were established in Calabar at the turn of the century³⁷. The first independent

³⁵Dr Annah said that Efiks sold plantations to migrants on a yearly basis. The migrants would then make over double the amount of money that they had paid for the land by producing and selling crops. This practice was said to have been a consequence of the days when the Efik had been slave owners and inherited land and labour.

³⁶ The 1963 Population Census for Calabar Urban cited Christians as 74, 609, Muslims 624 and others as 1,177.

³⁷ Chief Essien Etim Offiong III requested Catholic missionaries to come to Calabar in 1903. An Anglican Church was dedicated in 1911 and Methodists set up a church in 1914.

African church established in Calabar was the Christ African Church founded in 1918 (Hackett 1989:96, Mbon 1991:9). In the same year the first mosque was built in Calabar as more Muslim traders travelled to the city from northern Nigeria. The Salvation Army was established in 1928, the first independent church set up in Calabar that originated outside Nigeria (Hackett 1989:96). In 1927 the first instance of Holy Spirit 'possession' occurred with the Spirit Movement that started in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State about forty miles west of Calabar. The first contacts between fundamentalist churches in the United States and the Nigerian Independent churches were initiated in the early 1920s after the *Aladura* preacher Odubango found a religious tract published in Philadelphia, USA, which emphasised the power of prayer. In 1922 Odubango wrote to the headquarters of the Faith Tabernacle Church requesting information on the Pentecost, a request that was dismissed by the Faith Tabernacle church which sent a letter saying that the 'Pentecostal tongues delusion' was 'satanic' (Peel 1968:65).

The first church in Calabar to define itself as Pentecostal was the Apostolic Church which emerged from the Pentecostal revival that had occurred in the USA in 1900-1906 out of the Methodist Holiness movement (Bloch-Hoell 1964:47). The belief in the power of prayer and the gifts of the Holy Spirit that existed within *aladura* movement and the Apostolic church differed from the message preached by the Presbyterian Church in Calabar. The Pentecostalist movement cannot be defined in terms of one denominational form or set of doctrines. The distinguishing feature shared by all Pentecostalists is the experience described as being born-again (van Dijk 1992:159). The term 'Pentecostal' refers to the record of events of the Pentecost found in the Bible when the Holy Spirit descended upon the first Christians³⁸. The Pentecostal believer must first be born-again and this conversion is talked about in terms of 'getting saved' (Toulis 1997:126). Pentecostalist services provide a setting in which followers can achieve the

state of 'infilling' by the Holy Spirit in a 'ritual enactment of the Acts II' (Eliade 1987:230). When a person experiences the baptism of the spirit they can receive all or some of the charismata³⁹, the gifts of the spirit, and Pentecostals place particular emphasis upon certain gifts⁴⁰, the speaking in tongues, as a visible sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit, faith healing, casting out demons and prophecy. Bible study is considered of great importance by pastors who encourage followers to read the Bible at home and carry out Bible study groups within the fellowship.

In 1931 two Welsh missionaries, Vaughan and Evans, went to Nigeria and an Apostolic church was founded in Creek Town in 1933 which many Presbyterians joined⁴¹. President Okon, the head of the Calabar Apostolic Church in 1994, said the first Apostolic missionaries had gained many adherents because they addressed the problem of witchcraft. He added that the Apostolic missionaries contrasted to the Presbyterians who had known that 'demonic powers existed and that the spirit filled person could rebuke them, but couldn't practice that'. Several schisms from the Apostolic Church resulted in the formation of other Pentecostal churches, such as Mount Zion Church in 1946. Another denomination that had emerged from the Apostolic Church was the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World (PAW) founded in Akwa Ibom State in 1941 and established in Calabar in 1962. In the 1990s the Apostolic Church and the churches that had formed through schism from the denomination retained a large following in Calabar and in the rural hinterland. There were two hundred PAW churches in the rural areas of Akwa Ibom State and twenty in rural Cross River State. The early Pentecostal churches were all episcopal with a hierarchy of many

³⁸ Acts 2:4.

³⁹The term charismata derives from the Greek *charism*, which means supernatural gifts of the Spirit and charismata are taken by Pentecostals to refer to the spiritual gifts in Corinthians 1 12:4-11

⁴⁰There are nine gifts of the spirit listed, wisdom, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, distinguishing between spirits, speaking in tongues and interpreting tongues.

⁴¹The Apostolic Church was first used as the name of a denomination in 1916 in Britain and had been founded after the 1904-5 Welsh Revival.

officeholders, branches and disciplinary structures. They often drew upon the doctrines of the Holiness movement, advocating a life of modest consumption, puritanical values and the avoidance of western medicine (Bloch-Hoell 1964:32). The Apostolic churches were also considered tolerant of traditional practices by their members, although this was never stated by church leaders. I often met Apostolic adherents who were members of the *ekpe* society or who carried out the traditional seclusion for their daughters before marriage.

In the 1940s-1950s other new religious movements started in Calabar that were wholly indigenous to Nigeria but also drew upon aspects of the Holiness movement. The Eternal Sacred Order of the Cherubim and Seraphim (ESOCS), founded by Tunolashe in western Nigeria was established in Calabar in 1956 and the Divine Order of the Cherubim and Seraphim was founded in Calabar in 1953. Both churches originally had a large proportion of Igbo followers as the churches were brought to Calabar by people who migrated from Enugu in the early 1960s. The most famous indigenous church in Calabar was the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star. The Brotherhood was started in 1956 by Olumba Olumba Obu, a migrant street trader who came to Calabar from Biakpan, a small village upriver in Cross River State. Olumba started a prayer house that grew into a church organised around congregations known as 'bethels'. The Brotherhood had a very large following in Calabar in the early 1980s and one person, who was a Pentecostalist, told me that she estimated that then seven out of ten people walking down Calabar Road would be wearing the white soutanes that were worn by Brotherhood converts. In the 1990s the Brotherhood had expanded into an international organisation with bethels in many western countries including the USA, France and Britain. However, in Calabar, many Brotherhood followers had become born-again. The adherents of the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star, the Celestial Church and the Cherubim and Seraphim churches, all wear a uniform of white soutanes to church.

Pentecostals have started to call these churches the 'white garment' or 'white robe' church. Pentecostals say that the use of the colour white for clothing links the churches to *ndem* practices, because the adherents of the *ndem* cult also wear white clothing. The other type of religious movement that has increased in Calabar between the 1970s and the 1990s is the indigenous spiritual science movement (Hackett 1989:200).

Both the older Pentecostal churches, such as the Apostolic Church, Mount Zion Church and PAW, and the 'white garment churches', such as the *aladura* denominations, and the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star were popular with people migrating to Calabar between the 1920s and 1950s. There are similarities with the Zionist churches in Southern Africa. The churches provided material security for the rural-urban migrant and using the holiness gospels, preached a separation from the material ambitions and excesses of the urban economy, 'isolated pockets of believers' were set up against 'the threatening world beyond' (Van Dijk 1992:160). Calabar is now also the headquarters of the international spiritual science order of AMORC in Nigeria, the organisation of Rosicrucians. Members of the spiritual science churches tended to consider their interest as 'philosophical' and retained church membership.

The Pentecostal revival 1970s-1990s

The 1967-70 Civil War disrupted the whole south-eastern region. Many mission churches, particularly the Presbyterian Church, lost property, church records and funds. The experience of war also prompted more informal religious participation and prayers for protection and deliverance 'became the central religious activity' (Hackett 1989:106-119). After the war many connections were made with American Churches such as the Assemblies of

God and the Superet Light Mission of Los Angeles. There was the first crusade by an American preacher, T.L. Osborn, in 1976. In 1979 the Truth and Life Church was founded, acknowledging the impact of the T.L. Osborn revival (Hackett 1989:114). People had the impression that the growth of what were called the 'mushroom' churches had been very rapid. A neighbour in her early twenties told me that when she was a child in the 1970s she remembers 'only mission churches' in Calabar, such as the Presbyterians and Catholics. When the 1970s Pentecostal revival spread to the east the impact of the war meant that the first ministries appeared outside the university campuses and their message often focused on the need to heal the ethnic divisions exacerbated by the Civil War (Ojo 1988:180). The born-again meetings throughout Nigeria in the 1970s were often organised as small fellowships and prayer groups rather than formal church institutions. Instead of forming 'churches' with hierarchies of offices and formalised membership, the new groups were termed 'fellowships' and 'prayer groups'. A prayer group consisted of a group of people, all of whom were seeking 'infilling' and 'baptism' of the Holy Spirit⁴².

The born-again movement in Nigeria is an urban phenomenon. Although some denominations, such as the Assemblies of God, have set up ministries in the rural hinterland around Calabar, the new born-again ministries are found in the city and the converts that they gain are already Christians, a phenomenon known as 'sheep stealing' by the orthodox churches. Most followers are younger men and women who are first or second generation migrants to the city.

In the 1980s people started to form ministries from the small prayer groups and throughout the 1990s there has been a tendency for new ministries become institutionalised, a process also prompted by the requirement to

⁴² The first Pentecostal group in Nigeria was at Ibadan University (Ojo 1988:179). Since the 1960s the charismatic movement has spread through 'orthodox' churches.

register with the Federal Government before tax free status can be claimed. The term ministry is mainly preferred by Pentecostals to that of 'church'. The word church was associated with mission denominations, and was often criticised by Pentecostals who said it reflected the importance placed by mission churches upon the physical structure of the building rather than the spiritual life of the people inside. The 'fellowship' of the prayer group was more commonly referred to as a ministry when a permanent institution was formed. The word ministry encompassed the fellowship and a series of departments that had functions such as printing, evangelism, outreach and administration. The first Pentecostal ministry set up in Calabar from a fellowship was Revival Valley Ministry which was established by Pastor Idem Ikon in 1981. Pastor Ikon said that initially he wanted solely to teach the Bible there because he thought that if a formal institution was set up it could become an orthodox institution. However, Pastor Ikon said he realised many Pentecostal followers still attended orthodox churches and went to the Pentecostal fellowship when they wanted 'spiritual strengths' for deliverance⁴³. He thought that if the Pentecostal movement remained solely evangelical and did not set up permanent church institutions, they were 'complementing orthodoxy' rather than 'confronting orthodoxy'. The first Pentecostal ministries established in the 1980s were often influenced by the Holiness movement which taught that the born-again Christian should shun material goods, avoid lavish consumption and ornate clothing. In the Holiness ministries, members adopted austere appearances, often banning the wearing of jewellery, make-up and expensive clothing as well as warning of the spiritual dangers of acquiring too much material wealth. The Holiness gospel shared many similarities with the teachings of the

⁴³ 'Deliverance' was defined by Pentecostals as the process of handing over of the person's soul to God. Once deliverance had been performed people had 'protection' from attack or possession by the 'demonic spirits' that emanated from traditional practices. 'Protection' referred to the imparting of 'spiritual power' by the church to the follower that would dissuade the 'evil spirits' from attacking or would repel attacks that were made. However, deliverance was not accomplished once and for all, rather it was a state of being for the Pentecostal that required regular maintenance.

earlier Pentecostal churches, like the Apostolic Church and the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star, with regard to the consumption and ownership of worldly wealth. Much of Africa's current evangelical revival is directed from the United States (Gifford 1990:373), although, as Marshall has argued, gospels from the United States can be 'set to work' in Nigeria to address indigenous concerns (1991, 1993) an outcome that has also been observed in Pentecostal movement in Zimbabwe (Maxwell 1998a).

In Calabar, the prosperity gospel that emanates from the United States has been used to address indigenous economic concerns. In the mid-1980s, the Holiness Pentecostal ministries were challenged by the prosperity gospel introduced to Africa by American preachers at events such as the Fire Conference in Harare in 1986. The 'prosperity gospel' encouraged the accumulation of material wealth by followers and considered material 'blessings' to be physical manifestations of spiritual 'blessings' (Gifford 1990). The 'prosperity gospel' preaches that obedience to God and that donating money to the church will bring the believer material prosperity through the 'law of prosperity' which brings wealth to the giver (Gifford 1990:375). Likewise, poverty was said to be caused by spirits that could be removed through deliverance. In prosperity preaching, personal testimony became more important than scriptural references (Gifford 1990:376). In 1983 a US pastor called de Angelez came to preach the prosperity gospel in Calabar and many new ministries were started in Calabar soon after his crusade. The crusade by De Angelez was considered by many Pentecostals in Calabar to have introduced the new Pentecostalism. Several Pentecostals said that before De Angelez preached in Calabar, women in Pentecostal churches had always covered their hair and worn long dresses to the church, but he had said that people were not judged by an austere outward appearance. Pastors in some Pentecostal churches like Deeper Life continued to preach against dressing in fine clothes and the wearing jewellery and make up, but a splinter group called the Banner of

Grace split from the Deeper Life in opposition to the Holiness preaching. The 1983 crusade by De Angelez was also identified by many Pentecostals as the moment of 'defeat' for Olumba Obu, the leader of the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star, and the start of the decline of membership in the Brotherhood in Calabar. Pentecostals often told the story of the rainstorm that suddenly occurred during the revival, an extremely rare phenomenon in December, the middle of the dry season. Many Pentecostals said that Olumba Obu had caused the rain to fall in order to disrupt the outdoor service. Obu was considered to use the rainmaking powers that were part of indigenous spiritual beliefs. Many people who had been to the crusade said that they had seen a woman member of the Brotherhood, who had attended the service without revealing that she was a member of the organisation, suddenly confess that water spirits (*ndem*) were used regularly in the Brotherhood and had been used by Olumba to make the rain fall.

In the 1990s the prosperity gospel was far more prevalent than the Holiness gospel in the new churches that were being started at that time. Marshall states, in her study of Pentecostals in Lagos, that 'although numbers are notoriously hard to ascertain, it appears that at least three-quarters of the born-again community fall on the 'holiness' side of the doctrinal spectrum. But their influence in generating public attitudes about the community may be equalled by the Pentecostals who typically occupy higher positions in the social hierarchy' (1991:23). In Calabar numbers were equally hard to obtain, because new ministries formed so rapidly. The congregations of the older Pentecostal denominations, such as the Apostolic Church, which all preached Holiness gospels, had far larger membership figures than the 'prosperity churches', but in the early 1990s, of the new ministries that were being set up, most were teaching the prosperity gospel. Between 1994 and 1995 I did not hear of any newly established ministries that were teaching the holiness gospel, but heard of many that preached the prosperity gospel.

In the 1990s hundreds of born-again ministries opened in Calabar⁴⁴ and the movement has become very prominent in the city. The four ministries that I focus upon in detail in the thesis were all started in the early 1990s, but only one, the Liberty Gospel Ministry followed the Holiness gospels, while at Intercessors Bible Mission (IBM), Greater Revival Ministry and Overcomers Bible Mission, the prosperity gospels were preached.

The new born-again ministries exert a great presence in the city through the volume and the frequency of their services, which include 'tarry nights' that go on until around two o'clock in the morning and the early prayers at five o'clock in the morning. On most streets, fellowship meetings are held on weekday evenings and all day on Sundays, with the noise of the services amplified by large sound systems. Small ministries would rent a space in a school building or private house to hold a service and people would cram inside. Banners are hung at the city roundabout, advertising the next 'miracle service' or the arrival of a visiting evangelist.

A unity does exist between the older holiness ministries and the new prosperity ministries and is evident in the joint membership of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) by the larger holiness and prosperity ministries. PFN was a national umbrella organisation set up by older Pentecostal churches, like the Apostolic Church and Mount Zion, in the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN). It had been decided that the new Pentecostal ministries being set up in the 1980s needed to be regulated in order to 'impose some rules of practice and encourage the theological training of pastors' and to bring old and new Pentecostal ministries together 'under a disciplined system'. In Calabar the President of the Cross River State branch of the PFN in 1994-5 was Pastor Ephraim of the Pentecostal Fellowships of the World. Pentecostal ministries in the city were also drawn

⁴⁴ The research projects being organised at the University of Calabar by Essien Effiong has found that there are as many as one ministry per week.

together by the shared emphasis upon the need for 'deliverance' from the demonic attacks that were caused by 'tradition', a concern that is common within the Pentecostal movement (Meyer 1998:324).

Conclusion

Many inhabitants perceived Calabar to be a town on the economic margins of Nigeria as well as the geographical periphery of the country. Possible routes towards the economic development of the city was a shared theme of debate among people. However, the part that people played in the local economy was influenced by social identity, particularly their ethnicity, age and gender. I have described the social and political organisation of the indigenes and the migrants, focusing upon the history of the cultural distinctions between the Efik and the Ibibio as the largest group of indigenes and migrants. The indigenous people who held high-ranking offices in traditional organisations such as the *Obong*'s Council and the *ekpe* society, sought to protect the economy in traditional titles from the 'corrosive influence' of the cash economy that enabled 'imitators' and people 'who did not really know Efik customs' to acquire titles. Many of the indigenes in Calabar considered that associations based around ethnicity provided the best way to address the economic requirements of the city.

However, both the indigenes and the migrants wanted to promote the 'modernisation' of the Calabar economy and attract new investment. In the last section of the chapter I examined the different religious organisations that have existed in the town. I focused upon the formation of the mission churches, the early Pentecostal churches and the 'white robe churches'. I then introduced the new Pentecostal movement that has appeared in Calabar since the 1970s. Since the 1980s the new Pentecostal ministries have

debated the merits of the Holiness gospel, which condemns lavish consumption, and the prosperity gospel which considers the ownership and consumption of material wealth to indicate that the recipient has been 'blessed'. The new Pentecostal ministries reject 'tribalism' and the 'traditional' religious practices that serve to augment the members of ethnic associations together.

Plate 2.

Orange Order parade, Glasgow, 1993.



Chapter three The blue banner of the covenant: The mission culture of the United Secession Church and the United Presbyterian Church

In this chapter I examine the cultural context in which the mission was formed in Scotland. Throughout the chapter I draw attention to aspects of Scottish religious history that, I suggest, informed the mission culture that later emerged in Calabar. By focusing upon the particularities of the mission culture I question the way in which missionaries have been 'framed in universal terms, which ideally over-ride ethnicity, nationality, class and income', (Beidelman 1974:239)¹. This has meant that the diverse social and religious identities of European Christian missionaries in Africa have often been overlooked.

In a recent analysis of the European mission in South Africa (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991), the indigenous culture of British 'Non-Conformist' missionaries is examined. Comaroff and Comaroff adopt Beidelman's view that the overseas missionary movement 'cannot be separated from the Industrial Revolution and the rise of the lower middle classes' (Beidelman 1982:50). Comaroff and Comaroff then move beyond solely economic concerns to examine the culture of the 'non-conformist British missionary' seeking to 'disinter the social heritage, the cultural categories, the ideological baggage that they were to take with them into the unfamiliar reaches beyond the frontiers of the Cape Colony' (1991:55). In this chapter I point to the many differences within British mission culture. These

¹ Beidelman's study of C.M.S. missionaries in Ukaguru, provided the first ethnography of European mission in Africa. However, the work did not encompass the domestic mission culture from which the European missionaries had emerged. The discussion of the C.M.S. in England forms the introduction to the early history of the mission in Ukaguru (Beidelman 1982:48-52).

differences reflect the debates about the historical relationship between Church and State in Britain.

The Secession churches in Scotland

Comaroff and Comaroff argue that 'the industrial revolution forged the particular sociological context from which arose the clerical army of Nonconformist missionaries to the colonies' (Comaroff & Comaroff 1991:59). The industrial revolution produced 'two antagonistic classes' in which the self-made lower middle classes experienced an insecure upward social mobility. Non-conformism may have drawn its following from all social strata (Briggs & Sellers 1973:9, Thompson 1963:355), but the foreign missionaries came from a notably narrow band of the social spectrum. The lower middle class missionary set out to convert through personal example. In evangelical work the missionary sought to 'retrace their own journey through contemporary British society - or, rather, toward an image of that society as they wished to see it'. What they wished to see was;

a neat fusion of three idealised worlds: the scientific capitalist age in its most ideologically roseate form, wherein individuals were free to better themselves and to aspire to ever greater heights; an idyllic countryside in which, alongside agrarian estates, hardworking peasants, equipped with suitable tools, might produce gainfully for the market; and a sovereign Empire of God, whose temporal affairs would remain securely under the eye, if not the daily management, of divine authority (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991:59).

The culture of the British non-Conformist missionary must, however, be distinguished from the culture of the Scottish missionaries who emerged

from the secession churches. The London Missionary Society (LMS) and the Methodist Church recruited Scottish missionaries, Moffat and Livingstone included, but both Moffat and Livingstone had been members of the evangelical Congregationalist church (Comaroff & Comaroff 1991:83). The difference was not an economic one. Like the members of the evangelical churches, the Scottish Secession Church congregations in Scotland were also predominantly lower middle class, a trend which became more pronounced during the second half of the nineteenth century. In Scotland the textile industry predominated. In 1831 the largest single occupation in Scotland was handloom weaving, with 78,000 workers employed and with 10,000 in cotton spinning. In the 1830s-40s the Secession Church membership included tradesmen, handloom weavers and spinners. The handloom weaver was an independent producer, often self-educated and prosperous between the 1770s the early 1800s (Ross 1986:53). In the 1830s, however, factory production replaced the handloom and the factory owners defeated the cotton spinners in the strikes of 1837. After 1840 there was a concentrated factory environment, with fixed working hours, in which the workers had to keep the pace set by the mechanised looms. By the 1850s the Secession church membership was predominantly skilled workers (Lynch 1992:402). In the 1880s, further mechanisation meant that the work had become semi-skilled and heavy industry had started (Ross 1986:52). By the 1850s, 'two patterns were taking root amongst most Presbyterian churches, as more of the working classes dropped away...the pews were increasingly filled by the douce, sober-minded families of skilled, but highly mobile artisans; the prevailing ethos of thrift, self-help and sobriety was shared by them and the middle-class members of congregations, but it was the latter who provided the leadership' (Lynch 1992:402-3). However, in Scotland the missionary movement was also informed by political issues, especially the Secession Church debates about

religion and the State. The complicated details of the sequence of events in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as the clergy and theologians in Scotland attempted to deal with intractable problems of church and state. These were key issues for the nineteenth century missions that informed their work and sense of vocation.

Throughout Britain, the Protestant foreign missionary movement was prompted by the evangelical revival that took place during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In 1792 William Carey founded the first British missionary society, the Baptist Missionary Society, based in London, while the interdenominational London Missionary Society was founded in 1796. The evangelical movement reached Scotland in the early 1740s, and Scottish Seceder churches invited George Whitefield, the English Methodist evangelist, to preach. Evangelical religious revivals were held at Cambuslang and Kilsyth in 1742. In the 1790s Robert and John Haldane started an evangelical tour of Scotland, preaching in open-air services and distributing tracts in urban areas and in the Highlands (Ross 1986:60).

The Haldane revival had resulted in the establishment of many Baptist and Congregationalist churches throughout Scotland. Within the established Church of Scotland, the Evangelical Party led by Thomas Chalmers challenged the Moderate Party, and by 1843 the Evangelical party was the majority in the Synod. As in England, evangelicals predominated in the membership of the new Scottish missionary societies². However, in Scotland, missionary societies were also full of members from the diverse Secession churches that been splitting away from the established church since 1733. The Presbyterian mission to Calabar was founded by the United Secession Church, which became the United Presbyterian Church in 1847.

²In 1796 the interdenominational Scottish Mission Society was founded and the first missionaries were sent to Jamaica in 1800.

The Secession churches in the nineteenth century started to combine the new evangelistic revivalism with historical concerns about the autonomy of church government from the State that dated back to the Covenanting cause of the seventeenth century. The tension between the two strands of the Seceder churches, evangelism and Covenanting history, I think run throughout the mission movement in the 1800s and inform the mission culture. In chapter four I explore how this culture informed the work of the Seceder mission in Calabar.

Both Seceders and establishment Evangelicals opposed the theology of the Moderate Party, which had pervaded the Synod of the Church of Scotland since 1752. Moderate clergy were proponents of the Scottish Enlightenment philosophy that was taught at Glasgow and Edinburgh Universities from the early 1700s (Lynch 1992:349). The Moderate Party had adopted Enlightenment moral philosophy, religious 'sensibilities' were to be 'cultivated' and accumulated like other forms of 'good manners' and 'refinement' (MacInnes 1951:106). Religious truths were to be aspired to, rather than received by, the general mass of the people. The Moderate Party perpetuated a conservative social hierarchy in which the church received the patronage of the Tory landowners. The minister John Drysdale encapsulated Moderate conservatism in the sermon, 'On the distinction of ranks' in which he argued that the relationship between master and servant 'was inherently natural to society, in both this world and the next' (Lynch 1993:354). In the rural parish there was, 'an alliance of the propertied classes, parish clergymen, and parish school teachers defined religious and moral values for the community as a whole' (Brown 1997:691). The Moderate ministers' alliances with the landowning classes led the Evangelical Party and the Seceders to argue that many Moderate ministers in the established church were very much 'this-worldly' figures and had 'little experience in religion,

or true practical knowledge'. Moderate ministers were considered to be 'secular', for they, 'could talk of secular, farming, mercantile affairs and agriculture, but ask them anything anent the plagues of the wicked heart...they are over' (Howie 1779:58).

In 1796, the same year that the Scottish Mission Society was established, the Moderate Party over-ruled the first proposal for overseas mission put forward by the Evangelical Party at the 1796 General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. The Moderates argued that the time was not yet right for mission overseas, that mission was futile in those societies which had not yet the sophisticated philosophy of the European Enlightenment, for 'men must be polished in their manners before they can be enlightened in religious truths' (MacInnes 1951:140). The project of overseas mission was still being debated within the established Church of Scotland by the Moderate Party in 1841, when the pamphlet 'Missionary and Anti-Missionary' was produced, despite the fact that some overseas mission work had already been started in the established church by that time (Cheyne 1983). The later start of the established church meant that the Church of Scotland mission overseas did not match the scale of the Seceder church missions until well into the 1840s.

The membership of the Scottish Mission Society was comprised of members of the Evangelical Party in the established church and members of the Seceder churches. Both the Seceders and the Evangelical Party saw religious enlightenment not as a 'truth' to be comprehended, but as a truth to be experienced. It was the experience of enlightenment that prompted the zealous 'practical action' of evangelism, rather than philosophical demands of intellectual meditation and reflection. As a Synod member of the Seceder Relief Church stated;

all the members of this Synod shall encourage the laudable

spirit of zeal which has been excited in various parts of the kingdom, to send the knowledge of salvation to the heathen nations and shall unite their exertions with any society that may be formed to promote such a good and great design (Woodside 1917:100).

The anti-slavery societies included both Evangelicals and Seceders in the late 1700s, and early 1800s³. The Edinburgh Emancipation Society was founded in 1833 and was chaired by Reverend Dr Ritchie of the Relief Church and included Andrew Thompson of the Evangelical Party. However, Seceder marginalisation from the established church was to increase after the Voluntary controversy, and Voluntarists, 'felt excluded from their rightful position as leaders of their society by having taken the most extreme position on patronage and church establishment' (Rice 1981:53)⁴.

The Evangelicals and the Seceder churches in Scotland had an uneasy alliance. The Calvinist theology and the political importance placed upon the (Presbyterian) establishment in the Seceder denominations meant that the emphasis upon personal salvation in the evangelical revival was only partially accepted. The Seceder churches had initially rejected the evangelism that Whitefield and the Haldanes had introduced to Scotland between the 1740s-90s. Whitefield had been invited to Scotland by the Seceders but once he arrived and started preaching, he was criticised as a 'wild enthusiast', while the religious fervour displayed at the Cambuslang revival was considered by many Seceders to be 'inspired by the devil' (Lynch 1993:399). While Evangelical Methodism revised strict Calvinist doctrine of predestination and the salvation of the elect, Methodist

³The 1807 abolition of Atlantic slavetrading did not reduce traffic in slaves. Anti-slavery reformers argued that Christian missions could promote legitimate trade through forming Christian settlements (Buxton 1968:390). The mission movement to the West coast of Africa was believed to be reparation for the economy of slavery. Buxton considered that the end of the slave trade was a 'duty' to 'repair in some measure the evil that the civilised world has inflicted' (Buxton 1968:343).

⁴Voluntarist churches in Scotland supported the radical aspects of the British anti-slavery movement, and called for the universal abolition of slavery as opposed to more widespread demands for the piecemeal reform of the institution of slavery (Rice 1981:53).

theologians argued that 'the supernatural truth was to be manifest to the believer by signs, the most important of which was the conscious assurance of Salvation' (Peel 1971:38). In Scotland the fervour for evangelical revival in the nineteenth century was equalled by the fervour for the reform of church government articulated by the Secession churches, this time through disestablishment.

The Presbyterian government had been re-established in the Church of Scotland in 1689 after the long and bitter conflict between the Covenanters and the monarchy over the incursion of Episcopalian authority in Scottish churches. However, after 1689 the Presbyterian signatories of the settlement continued to fear the erosion of autonomous Presbyterian government by the Erastian principles within the established Church. Certain Presbyterian denominations, such as the Cameronians, had refused to sign the 1689 Settlement, arguing that the Settlement had not fully met the demands of the 1638 National Covenant. These concerns for the autonomy of church government intensified after the 1707 Act of Union. In 1711 an Episcopalian minister, Greenfield, was prosecuted by the Presbyterian court for using an Anglican prayer book, but the matter was settled in the House of Lords, over-reaching Kirk authority. However, the greater challenge to the autonomy of the Kirk was the 1712 Toleration Act and the 1712 Patronage Act. The Toleration Act gave 'quasi-established' status to the Episcopalian Church in Scotland. The Patronage Act restored the right of landowners and burgh council members as 'heritors' to select candidates for the ministry of parishes on their land, a right that had been removed in 1690 (Ross 1986:56, MacInnes 1951:81).

The 1712 Patronage Act set off secession from the established Church of Scotland that lasted until the Disruption in 1843. Throughout the eighteenth

century, clergy and whole congregations seceded from the established Church of Scotland in protest at the introduction of 'Erastian' church government and landed patronage. The first secession occurred in 1733 when Ebenezer Erskine formed the Associate Presbytery, a small group of ministers and congregations protesting against lay patronage in appointments to church livings and state interference in the governance of the Church (Brown 1997:686). The Associate Presbytery was deposed from the established Church in 1740, and the members renewed the 1643 Solemn League and Covenant with the 'remnants' of the Covenanting groups that had refused to sign up to the 1689 Revolution Settlement (Lynch 1992:399). This was the first organised secession to create a new self-governing body. The next secession occurred in 1747 when the Seceders split over the Burgess Oath. The Burgess Oath had been introduced during the Jacobite rising in 1745 to demand recognition of the established church. The anti-burghers seceded to form a separate Synod, and Erskine excommunicated the group from the remaining burgher section⁵. In the 1730s, the established Church of Scotland responded to the perceived threat of further secession churches by setting up the Riding Committee to press for the installation of ministers in parishes where seceding Presbyterians had refused to accept a minister. The Riding Committee prompted further secessions, in 1752 the minister Gillespie was deposed as the minister of a Torphichen parish by the Riding Committee. In 1761 Gillespie founded the Relief Church, the last major secession of the eighteenth century.

⁵The Burgess Oath was sworn when a person became a burgher and gained the rights and privileges of citizenship in the town. It stated that the 'true religion' presently professed within Scotland, should be adhered to (Hastings 1897:284). The anti-burghers started the discussion of Voluntarism in Scotland (Watts 1943:9).

The United Secession Church

Seceders during the 1700s sought to maintain the autonomy of the established Presbyterian Church of Scotland under an Episcopalian State and often evoked the history of the seventeenth century Covenanters. However, by the start of the nineteenth century, the contemporary relevance of the historical legacies of the Covenanting era were being questioned in the 'new light' controversy which changed the issues upon which secession was founded. The 'Auld Licht' Seceders retained an emphasis upon the cause of the Covenants, of the established Presbyterian Church government. The 'new lights' did not consider the aims of the Covenanters to be 'literally binding', and instead were concerned with personal salvation rather than national reform (Lynch 1992:400). Liberal challenges were made to the Calvinism of the subordinate standards of the Westminster Confession by 'new light' members (Watts 1943:9). The division between the 'auld' and 'new light' supplanted the distinction between burgher and anti-burgher, as both groups split on the issue between 1799-1806. In 1820 the United Secession Church (USC) was formed out of the union of the 'new light' sections of the burgher and anti-burgher synods. The unification created a church of 361 congregations and 261,000 members (Lynch 1993:400), in which membership increased rapidly and by the 1830s about ten per cent of the Scottish population were adherents of the United Secession Church (Brown 1997:686).

On the eve of the Parliamentary vote on the Catholic Emancipation Act in 1829, a minister of the United Secession Church, Andrew Marshall of Kirkintilloch, preached a sermon in Glasgow predicting the 'dangers' posed should the Irish Catholic majority re-establish the Catholic Church in Ireland (Brown 1997:689). Marshall argued that the only alternative to this

further establishment of Catholicism, was the complete end to the institution of established religion and the assurance of equality under the state for all religious denominations. Disestablishment would liberate the gospel 'from the coercive power of the State', allowing church adherence to be determined by the free choice of individuals and the clergy to be supported by the free will offerings of their congregations. Disestablishment was argued to be the scriptural form of Church/State relations, ecclesiastical establishments were without warrant in the Old Testament and did not exist within the early Church (Watts 1943:9). Marshall argued that establishment was unnecessary, inefficient and divisive and tended to 'secularise' the church, turning it into a 'political institution' (Brown 1997:688).

The 1829 Voluntary Controversy, 'united most Scottish Dissenters for the goal of disestablishing and disendowing the national Church of Scotland, and achieving the separation of Church and State' (Brown 1997:683). The campaign for disestablishment among Seceders replaced the concern for the reform of the established church. The Edinburgh Voluntary Society was founded in 1832, followed by the Glasgow Association. In 1833 the Voluntary Church Magazine was started. The first campaign of the Voluntary Society was against the Annuity Tax, levied to raise funds to pay the stipends of the established clergy. The Voluntarists refused to pay the tax, which they maintained penalised the urban commercial middle classes while favouring the clergy and professional classes (Brown 1997:689). The convergence of several social and political issues, including opposition to the 1829 Catholic Emancipation Act, the exclusion from the franchise of many middle class traders in the urban areas before the 1832 Reform Act, brought widespread support to the disestablishment movement in Seceder churches.

The Voluntarist movement ended the alliance between the Seceder denominations and the Evangelical Party. The Evangelical Party gave full support to the established church, being 'not Voluntaries but advocates for a national recognition and national support of religion' (Lynch 1992:400). The Evangelical Party expected that parishes within the established church should receive funds for the church extension programmes that were necessary in the newly populated urban areas. To modify the control of the landowners, the General Assembly passed the Veto Act in 1834, which gave the majority of male heads of families in the parish the right to veto a patron's candidate for the ministry (Brown 1997:693). The landed classes, who made large donations to the church extension fund, and the established church came together to oppose the commercial middle classes and the Voluntarist church. In 1835 the London Parliament started the Endowment Commission of Inquiry to investigate the tiends collected for the established church and that found that tiends were regularly retained by landowners in large amounts. The government then refused to give the endowment payments arguing that the voluntary effort was enough to raise new funds. Legislation was proposed by the government to recover the missing tiends, but the established church protested, knowing that support for such an action would offend their landed patrons.

Voluntarism transformed the secession movement, by turning the debate away from the need to reform the established church towards advocating complete autonomy of church government and finance. In 1830 the United Secession Church decided that each congregation should start a mission society to raise funds to send missionaries overseas and then to maintain the costs of the missionary. In August 1834 the Synod established its first foreign mission station in Jamaica, and the four missionaries that were sent there were supported by the four USC congregations of Broughton Place in

Edinburgh, Regent Place and Greyfriars in Glasgow, and the Presbyteries of Stirling and Falkirk (Woodside 1917:101). After this, the United Secession Church ministers became leading proponents of overseas mission. In 1840, Reverend Somerville preached at the United Associate Presbytery in Glasgow on 'The Conversion of the World: The Grand Enterprise Committed to the Church'⁶, and on the 'revealed truths which are destined to enlighten and convert all classes of men' (1840:5). For a church to start an overseas mission was considered;

The great public duty of the church ever since the day of Pentecost; and had she aimed faithfully to perform it, she would have been kept free from many errors, divisions and troubles; but it is particularly our duty these days. Our ships visit every clime. The way into the heathen world is opened' (Somerville 1840:18).

While the secession churches sought to transform 'the heathen world' through overseas mission, so the experience of missionary work was to provoke changes within the church. The first challenge was the Atonement Controversy that began in the United Secession Church in 1841. The USC had been founded upon the Calvinist doctrines of the Westminster Confession, which stated that salvation was limited to a predestined elect. The Atonement Controversy was initiated by a tract published by the USC minister John Morison in 1841. The tract was entitled, 'the extent of propitiation', and questioned the doctrine of the elect in the Westminster Confession. Morison argued that;

if it were not true that Christ died for the heathen, what gospel is the missionary to preach when he lands on foreign shores? Is he to tell that God loved a few men scattered somewhere or other throughout the world, and that therefore, for aught that he could know, there may happen to be some of these favoured ones among them, and for these Christ died? Men need not go to the heathen lands with the doctrine of limited atonement in their creed; or if they do go with it, they

⁶ 'The Conversion of the World: The Grand Enterprise Committed to the Church', A Sermon, preached 14th January, 1840, by appointment and published at the request of the United Associate Presbytery of Glasgow. Edinburgh: David Robertson 1840.

must hide it, and preach it in a manner practically contradictory to it (Cheyne 1983:63).

Morison was expelled from the USC, but the controversy that he had started in the church continued⁷. The USC eventually adopted the revised doctrine on atonement stating that; 'God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance...the responsibility of every man for his dealing with the free and unrestricted offer of eternal life' (Hastings 1897:287)⁸.

The United Presbyterian Church

In October 1846 the Synods of the United Secession Church and the Relief Church met at Glasgow to discuss the Basis of Union paper that had been put before the Presbyteries, and in 1847 the two churches were united to form the United Presbyterian Church (UPC). The UPC became one of the largest Voluntarist churches in Scotland. According to the religious census of 1851 there were 518 UPC congregations recorded, and by that time one in five of all churchgoers in Scotland attended the church (Lynch 1993:400).

However, the USC and the Relief Church had marked differences in doctrine. The subordinate standards of the USC had been the Westminster Confession, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms and the USC Testimony. In contrast, the Relief Church had adopted the Westminster Confession as its only standard. The main concern of the Relief Church was not with Calvinist doctrine but with the opposition to the institution of patronage in the established church. The Relief Church termed itself a 'union church' and continued full communion with the established church and was concerned to

⁷James MacBeth, 'Morisonianism refuted' United Secession Church 1844

⁸From the Memorial of the Jubilee Synod, Edinburgh 1897.

achieve the reunification of the Church of Scotland. To this end the Church promoted joint meetings with members of other Presbyterian churches, making a 'visible plea for a larger forbearance amid rigours of testimony' which 'contributed at later stages of discussion to final harmonies regarding communion' which contrasted to the 'strict communion of the Seceders' (Hastings 1897:24). When the UPC was formed, the USC doctrine and practice predominated over that of the Relief Church⁹. The Westminster Confessions and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms as well as the Testimony of the Secession Church, were adopted as the basis of Union.

The ministers of the UPC argued that the church differed from the established church and the Free Church, which were also based upon the Westminster Confession and the Catechisms, because the UPC qualified parts of the Westminster Confession. The UPC opposed; 'anything in these documents which teaches, compulsory or persecuting and intolerant principles in religion' whereas the Free and established churches had stated that they, 'sincerely own and believe the whole doctrine of the Confession of Faith to be the truths of God contained in the Scriptures' (Pearson 1877:2). The parts of the Westminster Confession that the UPC considered to 'teach persecuting principles' were parts 20 and parts 23. Parts 20 refers to the power of the civil magistrate to proceed against people who, 'upon pretence of Christian liberty, publish such opinions or maintain such practices as are contrary to the known principles of Christianity, whether concerning faith, worship or conversation' (Pearson 1877:3). In part 23 the civil magistrates power is stated to 'hath authority, to take order that unity and peace be preserved in the Church, that the truth of God be kept pure and entire, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed' (Pearson 1877:3). The second principle that distinguished the UPC from the two other Presbyterian denominations was that officer bearers were elected,

⁹John Craig in 'Relief Principles: Reasons for declining to enter the United Presbyterian Church', an address to the Relief Church, Provost Wynd, Cupar, Fife, 1847.

‘exclusively to the members in full communion’ (Pearson 1877:4)¹⁰. Thirdly, the ninth article of union ‘this church asserts the obligations and privileges of its members, influenced by regard to the authority of Christ, to support and extend, by voluntary contribution, the ordinances of the gospel’ (Pearson 1877:5).

Many Relief Church ministers opposed the basis of union with the United Secession Church, arguing that the Secession Testimony had been adopted and that the UPC continued to recognise the ‘moral obligation of the Covenants’. Craig points to the fact that in the basis of union, the UPC rejects that opinion that, ‘the necessity of covenanting is entirely superseded by baptism’ and also rejects the opinion that, ‘past federal transactions, by which eminent privileges have been secured and transmitted, bring no obligation on those who enjoy these privileges, or who have relinquished them’ (Craig 1847:6). In contrast Craig points out that the Relief Church denied, ‘the obligation of such covenants altogether, and regard them as nothing else than obsolete instruments of persecution’ (Craig 1847:6). The UPC had not even adopted full Voluntary status, Craig adds, pointing out that voluntary contributions were not recognised as the ‘exclusive source to which the Church looked to its finance’ (Craig 1847:9).

Overseas missionary movement was adopted as a central policy in the UPC. It was recognised that supporting missions overseas drew members into domestic congregations and increased donations to the church. In 1847 the UPC took over the missions in Jamaica and Calabar that had been run by the Scottish Mission Society and the United Secession Church. Overseas missionaries tended to come from the same lower middle classes as the church membership. However, their difference from that domestic congregation was recognised. The missionary was not sent as a

¹⁰As cited in Pearson, *The Principles of the United Presbyterian Church: Wherein do they differ from other Presbyterian churches?* 1877.

representative of the home church, but rather as substitutes to work on behalf of the congregation. Missionaries did not then necessarily reflect domestic cultural values, they encapsulated the transcendence of these values. Missionaries were contradictory cultural figures, they were often questioning of the bourgeois utilitarian philosophy which was 'clearly dominant' in nineteenth century British culture (Comaroff & Comaroff 1991:60). In Carlyle's critique of Benthamite utilitarianism the altruism and 'vocation' of the missionary were often evoked as counter examples. Mission represented such a vocation and missionaries were familiar with the idealism that challenged utilitarianism, such as Carlyle's attack on utilitarian philosophy published in 1829, *The Sign of the Times* (1971).¹¹

Conclusion

In this chapter I have examined the social and political context from which the secession church mission emerged in the nineteenth century. I have argued that the overseas missionaries in Calabar formed a small social group, untypical of the broader population and cannot therefore be assumed to be representative of the mass of the congregations that supported their work. Indeed, overseas missionaries often articulated values of 'vocation' and 'altruism' that were the antithesis of the hegemonic values of bourgeois utilitarianism. Once working in Calabar the contrast was accentuated as missionaries developed a tolerance for social practices that were roundly condemned by the bourgeois congregations in Scotland, such as domestic slavery and an understanding of polygamy¹². I suggest that the overseas missionaries were influenced both by the wider evangelical movement and the specific Covenanting history of the UPC. In Calabar, missionaries used metaphors of martyrdom, sacrifice and the reform of kingship that were

¹¹By 1900 *Sartor Resartus* had been reprinted nine times (1971:8). Mary Slessor read the text propped up against the loom as she worked in the mill (Buchan 1980).

¹²Church policies towards domestic slavery and polygamous marriage divided overseas missionaries from the home congregations.

drawn from the Covenanting era¹³ as well as the texts and songs of the evangelical movement. Both influenced mission interaction with indigenous leaders and Consular authority in Calabar.

¹³Opposition to the established church was through Covenanting in the 1600s, secession in the 1700s, and overseas mission in the 1800s.

Plate 3.

Hope Waddell Training Institute centenary procession, March 1995.



Introduction

Many Pentecostals in Calabar in the 1990s voiced criticism of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria (PCN). The most common Pentecostal concern was that members of the Presbyterian congregation participated in traditional ceremonies. There were elders in the PCN who were initiates of the *ekpe* society and Pentecostals claimed that the PCN should not tolerate this 'mixing of tradition and Christianity'. Pentecostals also argued that the PCN had too many close ties with the *Obong's* Palace. In 1994 Pentecostals cited the opening of the Calabar Festival, organised that year to celebrate the reign of the incumbent *Obong*, as an example of the way that the Palace was welcomed into the Church. The Festival began with a service of thanksgiving for the *Obong's* reign that was held at Duke Town Church. Pentecostals also expressed their disagreement with the fact that coronation services for the Efik rulers had held Duke Town Church since 1878. Pentecostals perceived the PCN as a 'traditional' church that tolerated its members' participation in non-Christian religion.

In this chapter I discuss the historical events that were often cited by Pentecostals in the critique of the Presbyterian Church. I first focus upon the way that the early missionaries related to indigenous authority in Calabar after their arrival in 1846. The chapter draws upon mission records documenting interaction between the early missionaries, the Efik kings and the *ekpe* society. I show how the secession church mission often claimed autonomy from the authority of the British Consul. I then examine the part played by Presbyterian mission in the first 'Westminster' coronation ceremony of the *Obong* that was held in Duke Town Church in 1878. In the third section I focus upon the missionaries I interviewed who worked in Calabar between 1929-1987. I show how during this period the mission

worked within colonial institutional structures, particularly through its role in the provision of education under government regulation.

The *ekpe* society and the early secession church mission

Pentecostals in 1990s Calabar were particularly critical of those elders in the PCN who were also active members of the *ekpe* society. In March 1995 the issue was highlighted when *ekpe* masqueraders took part in the procession at the centenary celebrations for the Presbyterian mission founded school, the Hope Waddell Institute. Presbyterians claimed that the masqueraders were there to commemorate the role that the *ekpe* society had played in setting up the mission in Calabar. However, opponents in the Presbyterian Church and the Pentecostal ministries considered that the presence of the masqueraders indicated the powers still exercised by the *ekpe* society and Efik traditional authority in 1990s Calabar. Pentecostals often told me that the early links forged between the *ekpe* society and the mission still flourished and this was one reason for the discord within the PCN between 'traditional' and born-again Presbyterians.

In this section I examine the early mission and the secession churches that first settled in Calabar in 1846. The early missionaries considered that they should reform Calabar society and that they could set about this independently of the consul officials. The reforming zeal of the missionaries was underwritten by texts of Protestant history. Reformation texts placed the authority of the autonomous church over and above the 'worldly polity' of the State¹. The Scottish Reformation had been particularly concerned with the reform of church government and the relation of the church to the

¹ The establishment of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland extended the domain of church government, increasing the number of legal cases heard in church courts.

monarchy². Reformation churches did not distinguish a discrete sphere of religious influence, rather the Reformation theology of 'good government' encompassed the government of the state, the household and the self (Simons 1995:37). The United Secession Church mission in Calabar sought, in accord with the Reformation model of government, an absolute authority over mission government. Furthermore, the mission government was autonomous within the colonial state, as Goldie put it, British rule 'did not enter into the design of our (church) government' (Goldie 1890:254).

Many studies of mission in colonial Africa have focused only upon the pragmatic political content of the relationship between European missions and European colonial administration. Missionaries have often been represented as 'preparing the way' for colonial government by drawing up treaties with local chiefs (Ayandele 1966:29). It is often argued that there was a reciprocal relationship between colonial authority and European missions because missionaries could call upon colonial forces to make local communities comply with their ministrations. As Comaroff and Comaroff point out, this perspective is not wrong, but it is 'distortingly simplistic', for it reduces the politics of colonial expansion to the laws imposed through treaties and brute military strength (1991:8). More recent work has explored how the cultural practices introduced by mission also worked to facilitate the establishment of colonial rule and the expansion of capitalist production (Beidelman 1982, Bowie 1996, Comaroff 1985, Comaroff & Comaroff 1991)³. In this chapter I show how the Presbyterian mission in Calabar did share in part the political aims of the colonial administration and introduced the cultural practices that facilitated the expansion of colonial rule.

²As opposed to the Swiss and German Reformations where theologians were more concerned with doctrinal questions.

³Comaroff and Comaroff focus on how a 'self-elected group of Britons sought, methodically to "make history" for people whom, they thought, lacked it, to induct those people into an order of activities and values; to impart form to an Africa that was seen as formless; to reduce the chaos of savage life to the rational structures and techniques that, for the Europeans, were both the vehicle and the proof of their own civilisation' (1991:14).

However, I also point to matters of discord that occurred between the mission and consular authority, especially during the early years of the mission.

The United Secession Church (USC) mission first travelled to Calabar in 1846 in response to an open letter of invitation from Efik rulers and traders⁴. The early missionaries were guests of the Efik rulers and were welcomed to Calabar with lavish hospitality by King Eyamba and King Eyo II and were allocated land in Duke Town. However, the mission was deeply critical of the Efik monarchy and soon expressed ambitions to reform the Efik polity by converting the king⁵. The Efik kings that the mission set out to convert had a long history of trade in slaves and palm oil with Europe. Each Efik town was a separate trading unit and formed a discrete political unit of self-rule headed by a 'king' (*obong*) who represented the househeads within the town in negotiations with the European traders⁶. The first detailed records by European traders in the late seventeenth century describe the prominence of the trading stations.⁷ Early mission writings denounced the Calabar kings as 'despots' and 'petty princes'. The missionary Anderson described the 'chief men of Calabar' as 'each a sovereign in his own house and over his own slaves. Each must have several hundred slaves and are bound together by *Egbo*⁸ law' (Marwick 1897:205). The *ekpe* society was the government

⁴Eyo II and Eyamba, sent a letter to Queen Victoria via a Liverpool based palm oil trader, asking about about new agricultural and industrial techniques and European weaponry to Calabar (Oku 1989).

⁵Covenanter metaphors of despotism and evangelism were intertwined themes in mission work. In contrast to many other nineteenth century missionary movements inspired by the evangelism the Great Awakenings of the late 1700s, the Calabar Mission was also informed by church-state relations in Britain. After the Act of Union, Presbyterian Church government acquired significance as a national Scottish institution.

⁶Houses (*ufok*) were organised around a patrilineal core and operated as corporate economic units, 'a trading association of freemen and slaves under a house head' was the definition given by Anene (1966:9). All households met as a council to debate town policy (Goldie 1890).

⁷The first written record by a European trader in Calabar was Barbot's account of a visit made to Calabar in 1689.

⁸Missionaries references in pidgin English to the '*egbo*' secret society refer to the same institution known in Efik as the *ekpe* society.

of Calabar and the higher ranks were dominated by Efik kings and chiefs. The missionary Waddell noted the fear that 'Calabar common people' had of *ekpe*, and concluded that 'it is chiefly by the *ekpe* society that slaves are kept in subjection' (Waddell 1863:155). The mission could become established in Calabar because it had been given the protection of the *ekpe* society by the Efik chiefs.

The mission set out to reform the 'despotic' government of the Efik kings using a model of Old Testament scriptural law. Goldie recorded that in his efforts to 'convert' the Efik kingship to Christianity, he advised the King to 'go back to the time of Nehemia, and copy his legislation' (Goldie 1890:49). An Efik king, Goldie wrote, is 'absolutely in power' and this assertion of absolute power and authority contradicted the mission claim that God is the absolute power and authority in mission polity (Goldie 1890:173). Goldie thought that King Eyo's claim that 'he could sell (his subjects) into countries which the word of God had not reached', epitomised the king's abuse of government (Goldie 1890:173). He argued that the Efik king could only reform the indigenous government once he made it into a Christian kingdom. However, Eyo II thought being a Christian was incompatible with the office of Efik kingship⁹. He claimed that it was not possible, or necessary, for an Efik king to be a Christian. He argued that through his considerable patronage of the mission he had already made his contribution to the establishment of Christianity in Calabar.

The mission also set out to reform the economic structures of the trust trade from which the wealth of the Efik rulers was derived. The trust trade was established during the slave-trading era when Europeans started to advance European goods to Efik middlemen who organised the transport of slaves

⁹Goldie recorded that King Eyo II told him that Christian rituals such as baptism, were only intended for missionaries to practice, that converting to Christianity meant becoming a missionary, 'that baptism was received only by missionaries, and thereby they pledged themselves to a missionary life' (Goldie 1890:168).

and palm oil from inland. Efik middlemen amassed large amounts of capital through the trust system (Dike 1956). The interaction between the missionaries, Consular officials and European shippers highlights the distinctive ideas of government that the mission espoused. The mission claimed a greater right to determine government in Calabar because their authority was based in their permanent residence rather than self-interested trade. Reforming the trust trade system meant disrupting long established political and economic structures in Calabar. In Calabar, Goldie said, preachers were ignored by Europeans and local inhabitants because the 'hearts of the people are wholly bent on trade' (Goldie 1890:11)¹⁰. Through the trust system the Efik chiefs established an economic monopoly in the Calabar hinterland, while European traders gained a stake in the machinery of local politics (Nair 1972). The trust trade had increased the power of the king as a mediator and reduced that of the houses (*ufok*). European traders had to pay each Efik king a duty, known as 'comey' duty, for permission to trade in his territory, the amount based upon the registered tonnage of each ship (Aye 1967:86).

Implicitly the payment of comey duty was the European recognition of the Efik king's claim to territory, recognition of his sovereignty (Anene 1966:36). The amount of comey duty a king received gave an indication of the town's value and power in relation to other Calabar towns (Nair 1972:23). After the comey duty had been paid, there was then a series of further social exchanges between European and Efik traders¹¹, forging close links between European traders in the Liverpool trading monopoly and Efik kings (Nair 1972, Dike 1956:109). The trust trade had become inequitable when European traders asked the Consul to retrieve debts. Europeans exaggerated the value of the goods they brought (Ajayi 1965:87). This way

¹⁰ Hope Waddell recorded a European captain had said 'he could not carry out the palm oil trade and keep the commandments at the same time' (Waddell 1863:261).

¹¹ After the duty was paid, dinners were hosted by European traders and Calabar chiefs on land or on the ships. The dinners were generally served on Sundays (Aye 1967:87).

of collecting debts encouraged European traders to abuse the trust system by presenting Efik traders with trust at such high levels that they could not possibly be realised into goods quickly enough. If the trust was not returned on time, the supercargoes considered that they were entitled to intervene and confiscate goods or call on the Consul to intervene. African traders in Calabar sought to escape the inequalities that developed within the trust trade by trading with the owners of the new steam ships chartered by European and Sierra Leonean traders that had started to arrive in Calabar in the 1850s¹².

The mission set out to reform Efik kingship through calling upon the authority of the *ekpe* society. Anderson, like many others in the mission, considered the *ekpe* society to be the most powerful indigenous institution. He pointed out that the *egbo* society did not recognise the authority of the kings in Creek Town and Duke Town (Waddell 1863). The mission recorded approvingly the stringent laws imposed by the *ekpe* society and were confident that the laws would be upheld. *Ekpe* was the supreme indigenous authority surpassing that of the Efik kings and encompassing all the Efik towns, it was the 'highest court whose verdicts transcended all else' and *ekpe* laws and edicts were placed upon kings as upon any other subject (Aye 1967:70). When the mission wanted to ban human sacrifice it was done through *ekpe* law. The missionary Anderson was convinced that the *ekpe* society would enforce the mission ban on human sacrifices. He recounts that King Archibong told him the law could not be broken and Anderson asked what was the penalty for disobeying. The king replied that *ekpe*, 'will chop (the person) down to nothing', that is 'he will forfeit to

¹²In 1853 King Eyo II sold palm oil directly to Nicolls, a Sierra Leonean trader, and was immediately opposed by the supercargoes. The supercargoes were backed by the Acting Consul, Lynslager. Yet Lynslager defended the supercargoes and opposed King Eyo in replacing the value of trust that had long described the trade, with the value of 'tradition'. Lynslager invoked an upriver 'native regulation' to justify the seizure of debtors and palm oil (Nair 1972:118-120). Lynslager's use of the term 'tradition' indicates the start of a new phase of colonial government leading to the imposition of formal administration in 1891.

Egbo all that he possesses'. Anderson concludes that while 'some fear that the law will not be carried out' by the *ekpe* society, he had 'no fears on that score' (Marwick 1897:238).

Anderson's conviction that the *ekpe* society could enforce laws, and should be allowed to, was not always shared by European shippers and consular officials. I detail one particular chain of events which illustrates the ambiguities of the interaction between the mission, the Efik chiefs and the colonial officials. In 1847 King Eyamba V of Duke Town died and, in 1849, King Archibong I was installed. King Archibong was the candidate favoured by the European shippers. The installation took place in the school house, 'with the full support of Commander Selwyn, a British commander of a man-of-war, in the presence of the people, the early missionaries in Calabar and the British marines' (Aye 1967:56). The appointment of King Archibong I was a point of agreement between the missionaries, the shippers and the Consul. However, later the mission started to negotiate with King Archibong I independently. In 1850, after consultation with the mission, a stringent *ekpe* law was put in place by King Archibong and King Eyo II to ban human sacrifice. The treaty was negotiated with King Archibong I by Anderson. Anderson describes how the public ceremony in which the *ekpe* law was imposed; 'Grand *Egbo* came down the river in his state canoe, and a most stringent *Egbo* law was enacted and forthwith proclaimed in the marketplace with the customary formalities, forbidding any sacrifice of human life on the death of an individual, of whatever rank or station' (Marwick 1897:237). A treaty was signed which banned human sacrifice, 'by *egbo* law, formally made and publicly proclaimed in all towns' (Marwick 1897:230).

Yet the maintenance of the terms of the *egbo* treaty were complicated when a further treaty was signed in 1851 which again banned human sacrifices. The 1851 treaty was signed by the Consul, the Duke Town chiefs and

twenty representatives of the Bloodmen¹³ plantation workers. The 1850 and the 1851 treaties point to the different ways the mission and Consul imposed the new laws. The 1850 treaty negotiated by the missionaries and signed by all Europeans and several indigenous rulers had been executed and enforced only by the *ekpe* society. The 1851 treaty involved the Consul and Duke Town leaders and slaves, and its authority rested upon an appeal to British government. As the 1851 treaty stated, criminal proceedings must not be obscured by the claims of the 1850 *ekpe* law. However, the two perspectives came into direct conflict, not in the signing of the treaties but in what happened later when the terms of the treaties were broken.

In 1854 the Old Town ruler Willie Robins died and Anderson records that the 'law prohibiting human sacrifices was trampled underfoot as many slaves and wives were prepared to be executed with the King' (Goldie 1890:170). The missionary Waddell recorded that action had to be taken by the mission to uphold the ban on human sacrifice (Waddell 1863:551). Mr Edgerley, the missionary stationed at Old Town at the time, recorded how he had tried to persuade the British Consul and King Eyo II to act against Old Town, 'I acquainted King Eyo that he (also a member of Robins' kin) had nearly the whole of his family in chains. I also appraised the shipping. The Consul came over here lately and I acquainted him with the matter, but none would interfere in such a matter as to effect their liberation' (Goldie 1890:174). The mission took up the terms of the 1850 *ekpe* law and made recourse to *ekpe* sanctions at Old Town. Anderson considered that the *ekpe* sanctions would have worked if enough time had been allowed. Anderson described his dealings with the *ekpe* society in his journal. He wrote that, 'it was formally made known by the missionaries to the native authorities, as *Egbo* interdict was laid on the guilty place, forbidding the funeral rites for the deceased till the breach of law was atoned for. In the native estimation

¹³The Duke Town houses owned plantation land outside Calabar. Slaves there formed a 'the Bloodmen' opposing the killing of slaves at funerals (Marwick 1897:252).

that was decisive'. However, Anderson notes that the funeral obsequies had to take place right away, 'as a successor required to be chosen after they were concluded and other important matters, both of business and pleasure, depended upon their regular performance'. He was sure that 'sooner or later, therefore, the heads of the town would be obliged to succumb and pay the penalty...King Eyo said that everything was in fair train for finding and punishing the guilty' (Marwick 1897:303).

However, the European traders, who in the opinion of the missionaries 'were simply temporary residents' and 'imperfectly acquainted with native customs and unwilling to wait on the execution of *Egbo* law', demanded a meeting with the Consul to call for 'a more vigorous mode of procedure' (Marwick 1897:304). The Acting Consul Lynslager ordered the destruction of Old Town 'in spite of the protests of Mr Edgerley and contrary to the wishes of the other missionaries' (Marwick 1897:304). Goldie records that the Consul and European traders ignored the 'plea (of King Eyo) and the protests of the missionaries were alike disregarded' (Goldie 1890:177). The mission condemned the 'unjustifiable action' of the naval bombardment when native law could have been used to resolve the dispute. In a memorial sent by the Foreign Mission Board to the Government dated October 2nd 1855, the mission pointed out that the Consul had acted wrongly. The bombardment was illegal, because they claimed that there was no treaty between Old Town and the British Government, so the Consul did not have the authority or right to interfere in the matter.

The mission pointed out that the treaty of Feb. 15th 1851, supposedly violated, made no reference to Old Town. None of the chiefs or representatives of Old Town was present at the making of the treaty, and 'could not therefore be bounded by it' (Marwick 1897:305). The bombardment was 'done in opposition to the wishes and protests of the missionary agents resident in the locality'. Furthermore, the 'language of the

Consul's letter of 19th January conveyed the idea that the missionaries united with the supercargoes in calling upon the Consul to grant redress for the murders at Old Town. This was not the case'. The Memorial stated that the missionaries 'were anxious that the Consul should use his moral influence in persuading the natives to carry into effect their own law' (Marwick 1897:306). The Memorial complains that the 'Consul disregarded their (the missionaries) protests, the protests of the only British subjects resident in the town of Old Calabar and deeply interested in the welfare of the people, and in compliance with the suggestion and requests of the majority of the masters and supercargoes, who are only temporary visitors, extinguished a native town and destroyed a mission station. This is a proceeding which imperils our other mission stations and all other missions along the coast'. The missionaries concluded that 'native instrumentality and co-operation are indispensable to native reformation and certainly much better than external compulsion' (Marwick 1897:306-7).

The coronation of the *Obong*, 1878.

In 1994 the Calabar Festival was organised by the *Obong's* Palace to celebrate the reign of the incumbent *Obong*. The festival opened with a thanksgiving service at Duke Town Presbyterian Church. The *Obong's* Palace often used the church to hold ceremonies that were part of larger festivals occurring at the Palace. The Efik *Obong* was still crowned at Duke Town Church, after a traditional coronation ceremony had taken place at the *efe asabo* (*ndem* shrine). In this section I discuss how the mission participated in the first coronation of an Efik *Obong* at Duke Town Church in 1878. I show how the mission played a mediatory role between indigenous rulers and the Consul to facilitate the coronation ceremony, which recognised the *Obong* as a native ruler. As a native ruler, the *obong*

was incorporated within the colonial system of indirect rule (Lugard 1906:190). I also suggest that in the process of legitimising the Efik kings, the Presbyterian Church was itself transformed.

The coronation that was held at Duke Town in 1878 was called the 'Westminster Coronation'. This is the basis of the coronation ceremony that is still carried out. The history of the coronation is described in the programmes printed at each coronation ceremony. In contemporary Calabar the coronation service is known as *uyara ntinya* and the 'Westminster Coronation'. The impetus to hold the first Westminster Coronation came from the Consul after King Archibong III had signed the Hopkins agreement to end slavery in Calabar¹⁴. The terms of the treaty were recited in the Christian Oath that became part of the coronation service. In 1878 the Consul crowned the King Archibong III. The Consul had arranged for ceremonial regalia to be sent over from Britain.

The coronation marked a close period of co-operation between the Calabar Mission and the Consul. For the mission the coronation brought about the reformation of the Efik kingship into a Christian kingship. It was subsequently necessary for a person becoming an *Obong* in Duke Town to swear the Christian Oath. The conversion of the office of kingship in Duke Town now paralleled the conversion of King Eyo VII in Creek Town. The 1878 coronation coincided with King Eyo VII opening the new church building in the town. King Eyo VII had, Goldie concluded, accepted the ultimate authority of God and placed it over and above his own worldly authority as king. Eyo was modest and retiring, even frequently requiring urgency to induce him to undertake any duty beyond what belonged to his office. The congregation elected him to the elders in which he acted as clerk of session (Goldie 1894:50). Goldie considered that the absolute power of

¹⁴ The Hopkins agreement includes clauses to abolish twin murders, *esere* bean ordeal and slavery in all its forms. Parts of the treaty were included in the coronation oath.

the Efik kings over the lives of their subjects had been reformed by the mission. He had noted that 'in any serious cases involving life which came before him as a judge, he generally informed the missionary at the station, and was scrupulously anxious to administer his rule, as he pledged himself at his coronation, according to Divine law' (Goldie 1894:51).

For the colonial administration the coronation served to bring a native ruler within the framework of indirect rule. Describing the system of indirect rule Lugard, the High Commissioner in colonial Nigeria, later noted the importance that he placed upon incorporating the chiefs within the administration and letting people see that this was being done. Lugard writes that 'the prestige and influence of the chiefs can be best upheld by letting the peasantry see that the government itself treats them as an integral part of the machinery of the Administration. That there are not two sets of Rulers – the British and the Native – but a single Government in which the Native Chiefs have clearly defined duties and an acknowledged status, equally with the British officials' (Lugard 1906:191). In Calabar, the coronation service, held at the Presbyterian Church provided for the Consul the most appropriate setting for the public display of the incorporation of the ruler within the Government. Hobsbawm and Ranger's argument that colonial administration was extended in colonial Africa through the use of 'invented tradition' also sheds light on the role of the Church in the 1878 coronation. The colonial administration sought to make the European presence in Africa 'more respectable and ordered' (1984:215). Ceremonies were then often inaugurated in the colonial context to provide an apparently fixed point of a situation which social and political institutions were rapidly changing.

The role played by the Presbyterian Church in the coronation of the Efik king in 1878 shows how such ritual and symbolic complexes were created. British rule was first established in the area through treaties signed with the

Efik kings in the 1880s. The treaties ended the rulers' rights to levy comeys on trading ships and the chiefs' sovereignty over their territories¹⁵. However the signing of the treaties alone could not produce the sense of conversion of the sovereignty of the Efik rulers. The mission was the institution that could best mediate the shifting political relations between Efik kings and British government and also publicly invest the *Obong* with the 'acknowledged status' that Lugard was to consider so important in the workings of indirect rule. In hosting the coronation in 1878, the Presbyterian mission played a crucial part in the recognition of a native ruler. The coronation of the *Obong* at the Presbyterian Church transformed the way that the mission interacted with the colonial government. The Presbyterian Church service became part of the process of the constitution of an Efik *Obong*, and contributed to the legitimisation of a native ruler.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century a discourse about native tradition emerged that underwrote the offices held by the native rulers and the word 'tradition' started to appear in the writings of the Calabar missionaries. The first missionary accounts reported that Efik spiritual beliefs had no doctrine, no public worship, no organisational structures and no permanent office holders (Goldie 1890:44, Marwick 1897:205). The mission represented Efik indigenous beliefs as confused and inconsistent attempts to seek the truth. Goldie remarked that, while the Efik do 'have a belief of an existence after the present', their faith had very much the 'haziness of a dream'. Goldie concluded that; 'in their shadowy notions revealed in their superstition of truth, we see a poor people, groping in the midst of their thick darkness after truth' (Goldie 1890:52). The mission's task was to convert people to new beliefs that, in the mission's view, were more consistent and coherent.

¹⁵ Part of a transference of power starting in 1856 when Courts of Equity were set up to regulate trade disputes (Nair 1966:117).

While the early mission did not consider Efik beliefs constituted a religion as they defined the term, they did accept the reality expressed in Efik beliefs. Scottish missionaries in the early part of the nineteenth century extended literal reality to the beliefs they encountered in Calabar¹⁶. The *ndem* (water spirits) encountered by the missionaries in Calabar were demonised, while *Abasi Ibom*, the supreme Efik deity, was used to translate God in the Efik Bible. These translations lent credence to the indigenous cosmology and demonised indigenous spirits found a place within the cosmology of the new converts. But by the late nineteenth century the mission in Calabar faced problems about how to describe indigenous religious practices. Western thought on religion was being transformed by the work of anthropologists such as Tylor (1871) and Frazer (1890) which were often based on missionary accounts of indigenous religion in Africa. Anthropologists produced the first secular writing on indigenous beliefs which was claimed to provide a 'scientific account' of religion that departed from missionary writing. Religious beliefs were not considered on their own terms as missionaries had done, but in terms of their social or psychological origins or functions. By the 1880s missionaries in Calabar had adopted this secular language and referred to the 'traditional religion' in Calabar. The language change is well illustrated in Marwick's edition of the diaries written by the early missionary Anderson. The simple condemnation of human sacrifice that was recorded by Anderson in 1850s is qualified by Marwick in the 1897 edition. Marwick adds a consideration of the role of the custom in the whole social system. He notes that, 'the practice of sacrificing human beings for the dead, although repugnant to our moral sense and appreciation of the sacredness of each individual life, is interwoven with the social customs of savage tribes and receives the sanction of 'nature religion'' (Marwick 1897:231). The critique from

¹⁶ European missionaries have often diabolised aspects of indigenous religion in the translation of the Bible (Meyer 1994).

anthropology occurred at the same time as debates informed by missionary work questioned the interpretation of the Bible¹⁷.

In the 1880s-1900s there was a secular critique of religion in the West (Smith 1964, Asad 1993, Appiah 1993). The secular critique reverberated in the Presbyterian churches and in the Calabar Mission and was particularly evident in the way that the missionaries spoke about new medical techniques and medicines that they were introducing to Calabar at the turn of the century. From the 1880s to the 1920s, the development of the new medical techniques was problematic for missionaries. The questions and doubts that were part of the scientific method raised questions and doubts about the basis of Christian faith. Mary Slessor, who worked as a missionary in Calabar from the 1880s to the early 1900s, objected to the new medical tests brought in to check the health of prospective missionaries. She argued that the medical tests removed the need for the missionary to 'have faith' that they would survive the physical hardships of mission work¹⁸. Yet by the turn of the century new medical techniques meant that far fewer missionaries died. The representation of Calabar missionaries as 'martyrs'¹⁹ for the church and as 'heroes' really ends with the accounts of Dr. Hitchcock, a mission upriver from Calabar until the 1920s²⁰. Dr. Hitchcock said that he often wanted to present the medical cure as spiritually inspired in order to attract more converts. He describes how, while doing an operation, he would often pretend to draw out objects from the body that were 'causing' the illness, in an imitation of the practices of 'native

¹⁷ In 1888 Robertson-Smith was removed from the Free Church College in Aberdeen for claiming that the Bible should be interpreted in its historical and cultural context (Beidelman 1975).

¹⁸ Mary Slessor had herself been a very sickly frail child and said that she would never have passed the modern fitness test used by the Foreign Mission Committee to check the health of prospective recruits.

¹⁹ Mission journals are full of deathbed scenes and the 'martyrdom' of the missionaries, provided parallels with the martyrs of the Covenanting cause.

²⁰ Dr Hitchcock was described as a hero by Reverend J.K. MacGregor, Principal of Hope Waddell as 'as truly as any who ever won the V.C.'. Hitchcock called Mary Slessor 'utterly heroic' (Livingstone 1920:15).

doctors'. However, while Hitchcock represents this as a sleight of hand trick, which is performed alongside the 'real' cure, the necessity for the missionary to perform miraculous healing sits uneasily alongside the material evidence of medicinal cures²¹.

While conversion to Christianity 'does not necessarily lead to rationalisation and disenchantment' (Meyer 1996:221), I argue that the gradual incorporation of the mission within the secular institutions of a modern colonial bureaucracy did. In a sense, it was the mission that was converted during the 1870s-1890s as it changed the relationships that it had with the institutions of colonial government. The mission was transformed from a body of itinerant missionaries living in tiny villages throughout the region into a modern organisation. Goldie points to the extent of the transition that had occurred when he suggests that the proposed Hope Waddell Institute should 'form a kind of centre or headquarters for the mission' (Goldie 1894:27).

The modern mission 1929-87

By the 1920s, the Presbyterian mission in Calabar worked closely with the colonial administration, running the school system. The mission's relation to the Church of Scotland had also changed, for the secession churches that had started the mission had rejoined the established church by 1929. In this section I draw upon interviews with missionaries who had worked in

²¹ Early twentieth century missionary writing used metaphors of mechanised production to describe indigenous religion. Livingstone describes an oracle as 'that blood-stained mechanism' that would soon 'be in working order' once the mission left the area. People who had become Christians would be the first victims (Livingstone 1920:37).

Calabar between 1929 and 1987²². I carried out a series of interviews in Scotland between 1992 and 1995.

Among the diverse aspects of Calabar mission culture highlighted in the interviews with returned missionaries, two points stand out. Firstly, the extent to which missionaries' lives were involved in the bureaucracy of the colonial education and health services in Calabar. Secondly, the fact that 'traditional' Efik religious practices were not displayed to missionaries during the colonial period. Twentieth century missionaries still fundamentally defined their task as one of promoting conversion from 'traditional religion' to Christianity. However, there was an awareness of the distance between mission and 'traditional' practitioners. Here I explore how these themes were expressed by returned missionaries. I refer to the following excerpts taken from the life histories of four of the Calabar missionaries whom I interviewed. I selected these four cases, firstly, because they illustrate some of the shared features that characterised the mission then. For example, the returned missionaries considered the mission to be an institution that advocated the spread of modern education and health care methods. The mission had become responsible for the organisation and provision of education in Calabar. It was evident that the recruitment of missionaries had changed since the early mission. Instead of recruiting people on the basis of their enthusiasm and zeal, the church sought people who could do the teaching and administration work that had become such an important part of the mission.

The missionaries I interviewed in Scotland were all educated people with professional qualifications. Often people had been recruited from universities or theological colleges, rather than from among the ranks of the

²²In the twentieth century many of the Scottish Seceder churches started to rejoin the established church. In 1900 the United Presbyterian Church had joined the Free Church to become the United Free Church (UFC). In 1929, the UFC rejoined the established Church of Scotland.

congregations. The mission sought people with the professional skills to work in the health and educational facilities that were being run by Church of Scotland missions throughout the world. Volunteers offered their professional skills to the Church of Scotland Mission Board and after preliminary training they were sent to a mission field. The Mission Council of the Church of Scotland decided which country the missionary was to be posted, so the missionaries who went to Calabar did not go there out of particular connection to that place. However, as I show below, the case studies also reveal differences in the extent to which the missionaries were familiar with traditional religious practices between 1929 and 1987.

Reverend MacDonald was a missionary in Calabar between 1929-1967 and I interviewed him on several occasions at his house in Callender. Over the thirty-eight years that he spent in Calabar he had worked as a district missionary in educational work, then as Administrative Superintendent and Chaplain at Itu Leper Colony just north of Calabar. In 1929 Reverend MacDonald was Manager for Schools, where as a district missionary he said that he had spent 'the major part of his time in school administration'. In 1952 his cousin Dr. Andrew MacDonald retired from the Itu Leper Colony and Reverend MacDonald became Administrative Superintendent and Chaplain. At the time the mission hospital at Itu was providing medical care for around four thousand of patients throughout the south-east and around one hundred new patients arrived each week. There was a hospital, school, an open-air cinema and a church in the three square miles of the Leper Colony. Oil palm groves were planted to generate an income from the sale of palm oil and kernels for export ²³. Many patients were discharged from the hospital with certificates stating that they were free of leprosy, but this cure often took between four and ten years to work. Then, in the late 1940s the new 'dapsone' treatment for leprosy was introduced, and by 1951

²³Reverend MacDonald records that the oil palm produce generated just over half of the running expenses of the Colony.

Reverend MacDonald recalled that nearly a quarter of the patients were pronounced free of all symptoms.

Reverend MacDonald was also greatly involved in the project to restructure church organisation by promoting Church Union between the Anglicans, Methodists and Presbyterians throughout the 1950s and early 1960s. Since 1910 comity agreements had divided the territory of eastern Nigeria between the Protestant denominations. The Protestant churches that made up the Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN) agreed that church union meant resources could be pooled and used to counter Catholic and Muslim influence in the region, without each denomination having to expand far beyond the territory it had already occupied²⁴. On the church union committee sat ten Methodists, twelve Anglicans and two Presbyterians. A joint theological college, Trinity College, Umuahia, was established in the 1960s to provide theological training for each denomination. In 1966 the Basis and plan of Union similar to the South India Church Union, was put forward, preparing for the amalgamation into the Church of Nigeria. As disagreements to the plans were debated, the whole process of church union was interrupted by the outbreak of the Civil War.

Reverend MacDonald said that he had had little contact with the *ekpo*²⁵ society and talked about the society as a historical entity. He described the ban on membership of the Presbyterian Church for *ekpo* members as absolute. Instead Reverend MacDonald stated that his contact with the traditional culture of the south-eastern region was through the people that he knew who gained traditional titles within their home communities. These members of the traditional elite were often also Presbyterian elders. One such person was Dr Akanu Ibiam from Unwana. He was appointed a

²⁴The system was modelled upon the Protestant Church of South India (CSI) joined the Presbyterian, Congregational, Methodist and Anglican churches in South India in 1947.

²⁵The *ekpo* society was the secret society around Itu. It is a distinct organisation from *ekpe*, the secret society of the Efiks in Calabar.

missionary doctor in 1943 by the Church of Scotland mission in Abiriba, Itu and Uburu hospitals. He was also appointed to the Eastern House of Assembly. In 1957 he was appointed the first Nigerian principal of Hope-Waddell Training Institute which he left to become Governor of Eastern Nigeria in 1960. The *Ntoe* Usang Iso²⁶, a traditional leader of the Quas, was a Presbyterian elder and an administrator on the Education Board. When Reverend MacDonald returned for a visit in 1981 he said that the oil wealth of the 1970s had changed the Presbyterian Church. One of the main changes was what he termed the 'new class' of membership had emerged. He thought that the members of the traditional authorities were losing their influence in the congregation. Reverend MacDonald left the mission in Calabar when the Civil War started in 1967. While many Presbyterians, such as Dr Ibiam, were opposed to secession, the church strongly opposed the provision of military equipment to the Federal Forces by Britain and the USSR. The Presbyterian Church became fully identified with the Biafran cause during the Civil War of 1967-70. The Federal forces considered that the Presbyterian Church in the east was assisting the Biafran cause and targeted mission buildings. The hospital at Itu was partially destroyed, as was the Mary Slessor hospital at Itu and parts of the church school at Ibiaku. Reverend MacDonald did not return to the mission in Calabar because of the extent of the destruction.

Missionaries who reached Calabar in the late 1930s often went into the administration of the education system. Reverend Mincher was one such person²⁷. He had had a theological training in Greek and Hebrew at the Divinity School at Glasgow University and had joined the mission after leaving University in the 1930s. Reverend Mincher's mission work in Calabar had also been shaped by the institutions of the colonial

²⁶The present *Ndidem* of the Quas. The title *Ndidem* (paramount ruler) was first officially used in Calabar in the 1970s, before this the leader of the Qua had been known as the *ntoe*.

²⁷Alex Mincher was in his late seventies and lived in Edinburgh. He recalled the Efik, Igbo and Qua languages that he had learnt to speak fluently in Calabar.

administration. In Calabar he had been employed as 'second in command' to the Schools Supervisor, Jack Lewars, who was responsible for the management of the finances and administration of all the Presbyterian schools. He also left Calabar in 1967 as the Federal forces entered the city. Although he returned in 1970s, he soon left again because he felt that the Presbyterian Church had been marginalised by government because of the support it had shown for Biafra.

The schools run by the mission gained increased funding from colonial government. The Hope Waddell Training Institute had been a technical school but became a boys' boarding school during the 1940s. Reverend Norman MaCrae first went to Calabar in 1943 to teach at the Hope Waddell Training Institute. When the school principal Reverend McGregor died, Reverend MaCrae took over as principal at the school and remained in the post until 1956. The Hope Waddell Training Institution had been established as an 'industrial school' in 1895 to teach crafts and technical skills. When Reverend MaCrae arrived the school had three sections, the school, which included infant, primary and secondary levels, the teacher training college and the three industrial departments of printing, carpentry and engineering. The school was grant aided and received substantial block grants from the Education Department of the colonial government, while the other funds were generated by the fees paid by boarding pupils. In colonial Calabar education was mostly provided by churches, with the exception of the schools established by individuals such as the West African People's Institute²⁸. The Hope Waddell Institute became a prestigious boarding school during the colonial period and pupils were sent there from throughout West Africa.

The land for the Hope Waddell Institute had been granted in perpetuity by the Resident Claude MacDonald, but was within the territory owned by the

²⁸ The West African People's Institute (WAPI) was established by Eyo Ita.

Qua. Reverend MaCrae said that the colonial administration forged a co-operative sense of government with traditional leaders in Calabar. The mission also had cordial relations with the Calabar traditional leaders, several of whom became Presbyterian elders and some of whom were employed by the Mission Council. The *Ntoe* of the Quas, Usang Iso, joined the staff at the Normal College at Hope Waddell and later worked in the Education Department. The Education Department was a colonial department where school policy was formed, grants were allocated and schools were inspected. Involvement in the Education Department also entailed close co-operation between the mission and the District Office.

Women were not ordained within the Church of Scotland until 1974 and in the PCN in 1982. However, not all the Presbyterian missionaries in Calabar were ordained ministers and women played a prominent part throughout the history of the Calabar mission. I interviewed Miss Archibald on two occasions in her house in Wishaw, near Glasgow. Miss Archibald was a qualified science teacher who had attended Presbyterian Church. She decided to volunteer for mission work and was sent on a one year training course in Bible study and 'cultural orientation' that was run by the Church of Scotland at St Colms College in Edinburgh. In 1964 she was posted as a science teacher at Union Secondary School at Ibiaku, about ten miles from Ikot Ekpene, where there had been a Presbyterian mission school since 1947. In the 1960s-1970s the school principal was another Scottish Presbyterian woman missionary, Miss McClaren. In 1964 there were then 300 girls in the school, which was jointly run by the Methodist and Presbyterian churches. The school received block grants from the Nigerian government, and the mission teachers then received the mission rate in pay and donated the rest to the school. Three years after she arrived in Ibiaku, the Civil War started. All schools were closed and Miss Archibald travelled out of Nigeria via Calabar and was there when the Federal navy ships started

to shell the city from the river. Mission staff from the Hope Waddell Institute took her in a car over the border to Cameroon where she then worked at Mamfe Presbyterian School in Cameroon between October 1967-July 1968. After a trip home to Scotland she was posted to Ghana until the end of the war. She then stayed on in Ghana because she said she had sympathies with the Biafran cause and did not want to return immediately to Nigeria to work in the schools run by the Federal government. The school at Ibiaku had been completely destroyed in bombing raids²⁹. Like Reverend MacDonald, Miss Archibald thought that the Federal forces had considered the Presbyterian Church to be allied to the Biafran cause and so bombed Itu hospital and Ibiaku School. In 1972³⁰ she returned to Ibiaku to work with Miss McClaren and stayed there until she ended mission work and returned to Scotland in 1987.

By the 1920s, missionary accounts of church work in Calabar illustrated the extent that once the recruits reached Calabar their role as missionaries was circumscribed by the institutions of colonial Nigerian government. Missionaries ran the education system and were also assigned to the bureaucratic posts that had been established to manage the schooling. In the interviews with missionaries there was much discussion was of the bureaucratic functioning of the colonial education system, the school boards, inspections, examinations and the colonial health services. The mission received salaries for their work as teachers. Part of the salary would be kept by the missionaries, while the rest was put into mission funds. This involvement in education meant that the Calabar mission was considered to be a modernising institution by the Scottish missionaries who worked there and also of the many other people in Calabar.

²⁹Miss McClaren and remained at Ibiaku School throughout the Civil War.

³⁰In 1972 the church schools were taken over by Federal government. The Presbyterian missionaries started to donate the balance of their pay to the Church Training Centre at Ikot Obong.

I was struck by how little discussion there was of 'traditional' religious practices when the missionaries described their work in Calabar. When Reverend MacDonald talked about the *ekpo* secret society he placed it firmly in the 'old days', before he lived in Itu. He stressed the disorganised nature of the *ekpo* secret society, saying that there was no central organisation and that many people wanted to join. And he added that *ekpo* members would never be permitted to become members of the church. Reverend MaCrae also said that while he lived in Calabar, 'traditional' religious practices had not been performed openly. In March 1995 he visited Calabar to attend the centenary of the Presbyterian school, the Hope Waddell Institute. On the day of the centenary celebrations there was a procession through the town centre. Before the procession started groups of old pupils assembled near Duke Town School. As the procession passed the *Obong's* Palace a libation was poured at the gates. Reverend MaCrae was among a group of old boys from the school who watched the libation. Later he said that this was the first time that he had seen a libation poured in Calabar. This initially surprised me, as libation is a common ritual in Calabar today. Reverend MaCrae's response, however, illuminates the extent to which traditional religious practices were not familiar sights to most of the missionaries I interviewed. This has not always been the case. The early missionaries had witnessed many such ceremonies in the compounds of the Efik chiefs. However, in the latter part of the nineteenth century, the mission had taken on formal, ceremonial functions within the colonial state, as illustrated by their hosting the coronation of King Archibong III in Duke Town Church in 1878. The coronation was a step towards the incorporation of Efik rulers within the system of indirect rule. But, by the 1920s, the structures of indirect rule were firmly in place and native rulers were enmeshed within offices of colonial government. For example, the *ntoe* of the Quas, Usang Iso, was a traditional chief who worked alongside missionaries as an administrator for the Education department and was also a Presbyterian elder. To missionaries in the 1940s-1950s, traditional

religious practices and the public appearances of traditional rulers were incidental to their work in Calabar. Schools such as the Hope Waddell Institute were perceived by staff and pupils to be centres of learning in which 'superstitions' were deemed irrelevant and outdated, and soon to be replaced by modern knowledge.

Missionaries who worked in Calabar in the post-colonial era note the reappearance of indigenous religious practices in the public domain. Miss Archibald worked for the Presbyterian Church in Calabar during the 1970s and 1980s. She said that witchcraft was openly feared by church members, including a school headmistress in Ibiaku who confided in Miss Archibald that she was afraid that she was being attacked by witches. Likewise she told me that she knew one pupil at her school who had an aversion to red and white colours and feared water. She said that people had told her that these were signs that the pupil was possessed by *ndem*. Miss Archibald said that church members were forbidden to join the *ekpo* society. However, she was open about the difficulties that the ban often caused for people in the villages. She said that in practice the ban created problems, for men who did not join the society were subject to fines in order to be 'left in peace'. Men who were not initiates would be pursued by the masqueraders. The masqueraders often came out and women were kept inside when this happened throughout the 1960s-80s during her stay there. In her opinion, the masqueraders constrained women's lives, for when the masquerades were out, the women could not go to take water from the river. In the aftermath of the Civil War, Miss Archibald's view of the Presbyterian Church in Calabar was as a historically rooted and complacent organisation. She noted the way that the Presbyterian Church had emphasised its long history, particularly in the face of increased competition from other churches that started in Calabar in the post war period. She said that the Presbyterian Church had become known in Calabar as the 'original church', and that during her stay she felt that there was a sense of authority in the church. This she thought had

imbued the church with a pride. She said that she thought the Church in Calabar assumed that 'due respect and membership should be paid to them' by people in the city.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have examined aspects of the history of the Presbyterian mission in Calabar in order to elucidate the social and political relations of mission with indigenous rulers and colonial government. I have focused upon historical events that are often referred to by Pentecostals and Presbyterians and which are deployed in contemporary debates about the 'traditionalism' of the Presbyterian Church. These events were said by Pentecostals to have forged an alliance between the mission church and the *ekpe* society that had never been broken. They argued that as a consequence Calabar had not really become a Christian city, and the fact that traditional practices seemed absent to the missionaries forty years ago, they claimed, did not mean that these practices were not observed. Rather the mission had not set out to confront the practices. Pentecostals maintained that the influences of 'traditionalism' were still pervasive, both within the congregation of the Presbyterian Church and in wider society.

I have also shown the way in which the relationship between the mission and colonial authority changed over time. The early secession church mission maintained an autonomy from the Consul on several occasions, while pursuing shared objectives on others. I describe how the mission hosted the ceremonies of the first coronation of an Efik *obong* in 1878 at Duke Town Church. The coronation worked to establish the *obong* as a native ruler and incorporate his office within the emerging framework of indirect rule. In hosting the ceremony, the Presbyterian Church took on a

new ceremonial function within the emerging structures of colonial administration. Pentecostalists in contemporary Calabar claim that the coronation also transformed the mission. The coronation ceremony was held at the church after a traditional ceremony at the *efe asabo*. By taking part in the investiture of an Efik king, the mission was considered to have become 'more traditional'.

The returned missionaries who worked in Calabar between 1929 and 1987 confirm that during that later colonial period the mission managed the education system on behalf of the government. The native rulers had by then become subsumed within the structures of colonial government. The traditional religious ceremonies that marked indigenous authority by then seemed to be quite incidental to the lives of the missionaries. The missionaries in Calabar up until the 1960s rarely witnessed traditional ceremonies. Many Pentecostalists in Calabar often said that as soon as most of the missionaries had left Calabar, traditional ceremonies were performed publicly by church members once again. The history of the relation between members of the Presbyterian congregation and the *ekpe* society and traditional offices, frame contemporary debates between Pentecostalists and the Presbyterian Church.

Plate 4.

Pentecostal church baptism in the Calabar River



Chapter Five 'Twelve tribes of Israel': Pentecostal social identities in Calabar

Introduction

In this chapter I argue that Pentecostal conversion in Calabar involved taking on a religious identity which provided born-again converts with a sense of agency with which to address problematic aspects of their own social experience. Many people experienced problems supporting themselves and their dependants in a highly unpredictable economy and labour market and the daily financial pressures and uncertainties. The certainty and agency gained by conversion contrasted to the unpredictability of living in a post-colonial urban centre. Caplan has pointed out that Pentecostals are defined by their 'insistence on privileged access to absolute truth' (Caplan 1995:93) and are 'reluctant to tolerate doubt, uncertainty and ambiguity' (Ostow 1990:101). Often in Calabar this reluctance to tolerate doubt was as much expressed in relation to the economic and social fortunes of Pentecostals as doctrinal debate. I was always struck by the air of certainty with which Mary, a born-again friend whom I discuss further in chapter six, asserted in conversations with women friends at her ministry. When they discussed their problems with her she quite simply responded in the future tense, that they 'will find a job, or house, or husband'.

Ethnic and gender identities in Calabar were shaped by varied factors, such as the experience of migration and living in the urban economy. Here I examine how these aspects of social identity were addressed by participants within Pentecostal ministries. In official pronouncements, the new Pentecostal ministries expressed a disdain of 'tribalism' and asserted that ethnicity was not important, what mattered was that a person was born-again. Other studies of Pentecostal ministries in Nigeria have noted the opposition to 'tribalism' (Marshall 1993:220). The 'twelve tribes of Israel'

were the names given to teams of evangelicals within Liberty Gospel Ministry who set out to convert people from their allocated 'tribal' territory in the town¹. Many studies of Pentecostals have emphasised the factors that members share as a collectivity. In this chapter, however, I want look more closely at the way that social identities, of ethnicity, gender, income and age did inform social relations between the people who went to Pentecostal ministries. As I show below, in many social contexts, ethnicity did inform social relations among Pentecostals. The recruitment of members, acquiring land and buildings, were all accomplished within the wider social context in which ethnicity was an important marker of social difference. Similarly, I argue that the value placed upon social egalitarianism by many Pentecostals (Marshall 1993:224) was not always reflected in the daily social interactions of the ministry. In some ministries, particularly where the prosperity gospel was taught, elite social status was in fact highly valued and differences in wealth were taken to reflect the bestowal of different blessings.

In this chapter I examine the social identities of the members of four Pentecostal ministries in Calabar through the personal accounts of individuals and through survey data. The ethnographic material was gathered from informal discussions, interviews and questionnaire surveys carried out with participants at The Intercessor's Bible Mission, Overcomers Bible Mission, Greater Revival Ministry and Liberty Gospel Ministry. The four ministries were chosen because they were all part of the new 'revival' of the 1990s discussed in chapter two. However the differences that did exist between them illustrated the contrasting ways that the ministries represented ethnicity and gender relations. All these ministries were formed between 1990 and 1992 by Nigerians from the south-east, as 'independent' ministries. None were branches of global Pentecostal organisations, although several of the leaders told me that they aimed to set up links with international organisations and one had achieved

¹ The name echoed claims made by some Efiks to Hebrew ancestry.

some success². The four ministries were considered 'well-established denominations' by their followers because the ministry owned or rented a church building on a permanent site. Also the leaders described themselves working as 'full-time pastors' who did not rely on secular jobs or gifts from wealthy sponsors to support their families or the ministry.

The four ministries recorded a membership of between one hundred and two thousand followers, with many of these followers attending services two or three times a week. The four ministries had formal constitutions and hierarchical structures of offices that were held by followers and leaders³. Both pastors and lay office holders gained qualifications from the new Bible Colleges that grew alongside the ministries⁴. There were also important points of difference between the four ministries. As I described in chapter two, Liberty Gospel Ministry was led by a woman evangelist Mrs Helen Ukpabio, who adhered to the Holiness gospel, while the other three ministries taught the prosperity gospel, so the case studies provide two different interpretations of the morality of material wealth. Members of the four ministries also differed in their relationship to the economy. At Greater Revival Ministry there were many younger, male Igbo traders among the congregation, while at Overcomers Bible Mission, there were many Ibibio people who had migrated to Calabar and told the same narratives of business boom and bust related by the founder. The story told by Pastor Abraham later in this chapter also illustrates the way in which setting up a Pentecostal ministry in Calabar was considered to be a wise business venture. Lastly, IBM was the only ministry that was founded and led by an Efik indigene and which had a larger Efik membership than the other ministries.

²Pastor Demus Abrahams had affiliated his church to a revival ministry called 'The Word Ministries' run by members of the Assemblies of God based in Birmingham, England.

³There were office holders, temporary preachers, and followers who were major financial sponsors of the ministry, or who provided land and property, and some participants were considered to have 'spiritual gifts'.

⁴An example being the World Harvest Bible College, Mayne Avenue, where aspiring pastors were trained for work in Pentecostal ministries.

I explore in detail the experiences of people who were migrants and people who were members of indigenous ethnic groups. The majority of Pentecostal members in Calabar were first or second generation migrants who had moved to Calabar from the surrounding rural areas and small towns of neighbouring states between the early 1970s into the 1990s. Between 1963 and the 1990 Calabar Municipality Local Government Area had the highest population growth of all Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Cross River State and Akwa Ibom State⁵, in part increased by migration from rural areas and small towns. In the centre of Calabar there were two bus parks where people could catch buses out to the rural parts of Cross River State and to the neighbouring states of Imo, Anambra, Akwa Ibom and Benue States. It was common to hear that a person had 'travelled' back to their home village for several days, to attend a village meeting or a family ceremony or to assist during the harvest or planting seasons. People also returned home when work was short in the city. In Calabar migrant labourers worked in market stalls, clerical posts in the state administration, serving in bars and restaurants and in transportation, particularly the motorcycle taxi trade.

In the questionnaire survey that I carried out at the ministries, seventy per cent of respondents⁶ at Liberty Gospel Ministry and Overcomers Bible Ministry were born outside Calabar. At Greater Revival Ministry the figure was higher, around eighty per cent of followers were first or second generation migrants who had been born outside Calabar and had moved to the city to attend school or find work. When people moved to Calabar many became born-again, leaving the orthodox denominations they had attended in their home village. I describe below how Pentecostals who were migrants and indigenes in Calabar emphasised their shared experience as born-again

⁵ From the *Cross River State and Akwa Ibom State Population Bulletin 1983-90*, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Statistics Division, Calabar, Cross River State, June 1985.

⁶ These percentages come from a total of thirty questionnaires, distributed to ten people at Liberty Gospel Ministry, ten at Overcomers Bible Ministry and ten at Greater Revival Ministry. Further copies of the questionnaire were distributed to people in the same ministries, confirming the initial results.

converts and rarely joined organisations based upon shared ethnicity. Pentecostals often said that ethnic organisations had caused 'so much strife in the south-east' during the 1967-70 Civil War that 'healing' was needed to mend the conflicts. Women made up about two thirds of the recorded membership in most Pentecostal ministries in Calabar, a similar proportion to orthodox denominations⁷. However, in the Pentecostal movement women were also often active in ministerial roles as well.⁸ I focus on the experience of Pentecostal women in finding employment in an urban setting, and discuss how the Pentecostal ministries addressed women's concerns. Gendered identity clearly informed the definition of the boundaries of the born-again group, in which 'the proper behaviour of women is used to signify the difference between those who belong to the collectivity and those who do not' (Yuval-Davis 1994:43).

I approach the construction of born-again identity as 'strategic and positional...constructed through, not outside difference' (Hall 1996:4-5), examining how the born-again person was defined in contrast to the 'unsaved' people who were categorised as 'outside' the fellowship. In Calabar this formation of social identity through self-definition 'is an act of power' (Laclau 1990:33 in Hall 1996:5). Many born-again converts told me that while they might appear externally unchanged by conversion, they 'saw the world differently', they were 'infilled' with the 'power' of the Holy Spirit. Toulis has argued that Pentecostals often see the people of the unsaved world, 'as content to live with received identities; but to be Christian involves an act of will' (Toulis 1997:20). Converts often emphasised that becoming born-again was an act of volition, they had not simply 'inherited' their religious affiliation from the orthodox church that their family used to attend, nor did they perpetuate family 'traditions' of

⁷ In contrast to the membership of orthodox denominations, Pentecostal followers at the four ministries tended to be much younger, the vast majority of members, men and women, were in their twenties and thirties.

⁸ At Overcomers Bible Mission women made up over sixty per cent of the following. IBM had a following of six hundred members and of these again around sixty per cent were women and forty per cent were men.

membership of ethnic organisations⁹. I show how the organisation of Pentecostal ministries challenged the hierarchies based upon gender and age prevalent in orthodox churches and 'traditional' ethnic and state government. The accounts of conversion and 'testimonies' given by born-again converts that I present in this chapter all present a dichotomy between the 'modern' born-again convert and the 'traditional' person, the latter commonly being the member of the orthodox church or the member of an organisation based on ethnicity. Other studies of Pentecostals in West Africa have highlighted similar concerns with the construction of modern subjects and similar ways of representing 'tradition' as 'past' (Meyer 1998:318). Pentecostals in Calabar often argued that the 'traditional ethnic elite' that controlled much landed property in Calabar was 'living in the past' and 'would disappear in the next ten years', while, in contrast, converts could encompass social change, gain an education and jobs in the city. However I show in this chapter how the experience of the precarious urban economy often meant that the separation between a traditional past and a modern present was neither absolute nor complete, people often continued to migrate between the city and their home villages on a regular basis.

Pentecostals and urban identities in Calabar

Pentecostal conversion in Calabar is part of the post-colonial 'cultural politics of identities in transition' (Werbner and Ranger 1996:2), mediating between different ethnicities through encompassing people from all ethnic groups. In colonial Calabar, as throughout Nigeria, ethnic identity was considered the primary social identity, a cultural and historical given (1996:2). Pentecostals emphasised the shared experience of conversion in

⁹Toulis argues that for many Jamaicans in Britain Pentecostalism provides a 'powerful forum for the construction of new identities'. Through being born-again, 'a migrant minority group redefines the boundaries of group identity' (Toulis 1997:2-3).

the present, not shared cultural histories, a conversion which enables 'the mediation of conflicting...situations of multiple identification' (Marshall-Fratani 1998:284). When a person becomes born-again it is possible to assimilate other identities 'within a complex of discourses and practices governing all aspects of social, cultural, economic and political life...one can learn to be a born-again woman, Yoruba, businessman, politician, southerner or husband' (1998:284). Disparate social identities that caused conflict were, by joining a fellowship, reconciled. Born again converts constructed a sense of belonging to a shared social category through the exclusion of others. Certain social boundaries were re-emphasised, for 'being born-again is simply incompatible with certain other forms of identification, most obviously religious' (Marshall-Fratani 1998:284).

Pentecostals in Calabar represented the powers of traditional government in religious terms, as 'demonic' and based upon forces of indigenous cosmology. It was from this religious standpoint that many Pentecostals articulated their resentment of the fact that Efik, Efut and Qua indigenes 'owned a lot of land and property' in Calabar and lived on the rents and government compensation revenues gained from that land and 'did no real work'. In the absence of elected state government the Efik paramount ruler, sanctioned by the authority of local cosmology, claimed to represent all the inhabitants of Calabar, despite the fact that most of the inhabitants of Calabar were not Efik, Qua or Efut¹⁰. Born-again converts were concerned to subsume 'reformed' and 'modernised' ethnic identities within born-again identity.

Some migrants chose to attend 'orthodox'¹¹ churches when they came to Calabar, often because they had been baptised into that orthodox

¹⁰ The proportion of each ethnic group in each ministry roughly corresponded with the relative size of each ethnic group in the population of the city. Official censuses in Nigeria are no longer permitted to gather information on ethnic identity, but most people in Calabar had shared similar estimates of the relative size of each ethnic group in the city.

¹¹ Pentecostals commonly used the term 'orthodox' to refer to churches that had been founded by European missionaries and did not believe in Holy Spirit baptism.

denomination in their village. In the Calabar hinterland the Presbyterian Church was the oldest denomination and had many parishes inland, extending into Imo, Anambra and Akwa Ibom States. Often an inland village would have one church, usually a Presbyterian Church, which had incorporated traditional leaders into eldership¹², perpetuating the close historical correlation between religious affiliation and ethnic identity forged by many nineteenth century missions in Africa (Mitchell 1974:29). However, when migrants settled in Calabar many joined new Pentecostal ministries rather than joining a parish of the orthodox denomination they had attended at home, while others attended orthodox churches but started to go to Pentecostal services as well. Some people said that they had found the 'orthodox churches' in the city 'were snobby' and that 'indigenous' involvement in church government, often by high ranking 'strong indigenes' in Calabar, made newcomers feel excluded. In particular the Presbyterian Church was considered to be 'an Efik church run by Efiks'. This was particularly noted in certain parishes such as Duke Town and Creek Town where session elders were Efiks and, as one man from Akwa Ibom said, 'felt that they owned the whole town'.

Greater Revival Ministry

In this section I describe the Greater Revival Ministry that was founded in Calabar in 1993 by Pastor Ohiri, an Igbo minister from Imo State. While Pentecostals in the south-east 'shared' the experience of being born again and often said that the ethnic conflict of the Civil War was being 'healed' by the born-again movement, ethnic differences did inform patterns of

¹²In rural Cross River State villages had often a Presbyterian church or school. The other denomination common in the villages was the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star. There were few Pentecostal ministries in rural areas.

social interaction within the ministries¹³. As I discuss below, in Greater Revival Ministry, the narrative of Pastor Ohiri's relocation to Calabar and the networks of financial patronage that sprung up among the followers, illustrated the influence of ethnic allegiances within the ministry. The case study also introduces Pastor Ohiri's ambitions to institutionalise the ministry, despite the emphasis placed upon the 'newness' of the ministry and the egalitarian participation of people at services. In addition Greater Revival Ministry was also concerned to expand the institutional structures of the church by setting up branches in Nigeria and establishing ties with ministries overseas.

Pastor Ohiri was born in Mbaitoli LGA, Orodo Town in Imo State into a Catholic family. He was baptised into the Catholic Church but said that he did not consider his family to be 'real Christians' as his parents continued to practice 'traditional religion' and he remembered going with his father to the traditional shrine in the village to make sacrifices. As an adult, Pastor Ohiri left the Catholic Church and became born-again in the early 1980s. In 1987 he graduated from Trinity College of Ministerial Arts and was ordained Reverend Minister¹⁴. He started the Greater Revival Ministry in Kano on August 10th 1988 but had left the city in 1991 when riots broke out between Christians and Muslims. His family house had been destroyed and he and his wife were evacuated with other Christians to the army barracks until the rioting stopped. Many Igbo pastors in the north decided to move their ministries back to the south-east, and Pastor Ohiri chose Calabar as he said that other pastors had told him that there were plenty of followers there keen to join a Pentecostal ministry. Funding from sponsors, such as Mr Okafor whom I discuss below, meant that in 1993 Pastor Ohiri had managed to find a house to rent and used a covered area in the compound to hold services. The Greater Revival ministry was set up in Calabar in 15th

¹³At IBM, Overcomers Bible Mission and Liberty Gospel Ministry the ethnic composition reflected that of the city. Only Greater Revival Ministry had a large proportion of Igbo participants, fifty per cent of the members were Igbo.

¹⁴The school was run by the Association of International Gospel Assembly Incorporated, USA from De Soto, Missouri, USA.

November 1993 and was fully registered with the Federal Government by the end of 1993. The ministry was set up with a constitution with four 'levels' of church government, Pastor Ohiri was listed as the 'General Overseer. Pastor Ohiri officiated over the Board of Ministers, which in early 1994 had four members, three men and one woman, all pastors who had been ordained in Pastor Ohiri's ministry. He said that he intended to have many more ministers on the board as the ministry expanded in the future. The Board of Lay Leaders, who worked under the guidance of the local church pastors, supervising the activities of the local fellowships, which could also become local churches. Although there was only one branch of the ministry, the constitution had been set up to encompass new branches outside Calabar, including branches back in Pastor Ohiri's home village¹⁵.

The new ministry gathered an initial fellowship of around one hundred and fifty people from diverse ethnic backgrounds. However, Greater Revival Ministry became particularly popular with young Igbo traders and on several occasions I interviewed some of the traders after the Sunday service. The accounts of the Igbo traders illustrate the way that ethnic affiliation and the uncertainties of migration influenced their decision to go to a born-again ministry. Two of traders, Joe and Samuel, told me more about their business ventures and why they had decided to go to Greater Revival Ministry. They said that they had first attended the ministry because the pastor was an Igbo and so they thought he would 'understand' their home villages and the family networks to which they belonged. Of the fifty per cent of the following that were Igbo, the majority were young men who had come to Calabar as migrants looking for employment. One Igbo man I interviewed, called Joe, told me he was from a village near Arochukwu and had travelled to Calabar to work as a motorcycle mechanic.

¹⁵The links that migrant pastors had to their home regions meant that after setting up a ministry in Calabar they often started a 'branch' of the ministry in their home area. They had the contacts to set that up and then were able to organise a ministry with several branches, which added to the status of the ministry. This was the case with Overcomers Bible Mission and with Liberty Gospel Ministry as well.

The trade in electrical goods and motor spare parts in Calabar was dominated by Igbo traders, and shop owners would invite people from their village to work at their shop in Calabar.

After working for several years as an apprentice and then as part owner of the business, he managed to raise quite a large sum of money which he decided to invest in setting up a spare parts shop on Bedwell Street in partnership with some other Igbo traders. Samuel, another young Igbo man at the ministry was a trader who had also come to Calabar from Arochukwu about six months before to trade in electrical goods and do repairs on fridges. He had been invited to set up shop in Calabar by his older cousin who had been trading there for the last ten years. Both traders had been quite successful during the early stages of their businesses in Calabar and had also joined a trading association of spare parts dealers, which included many of his fellow Igbo shop-keepers. However, both traders said that the close ethnic ties between people in the business could lead to jealousies and they feared that their successes might provoke the 'ill feeling' of other traders and friends. Joe told me that when a mechanic died recently showing symptoms of poisoning he had feared witchcraft was the cause and it was that incident that first prompted him to go to Greater Revival Ministry. Before he arrived in Calabar he had not gone to church at all, but had attended some services with family members that were held at the Presbyterian Church. However, when he settled in Calabar he had decided that he needed the 'more powerful protection' of the new ministry. At the ministry he said he could meet other Igbo mechanics without fear or suspicion, for the church was not defined by the economic and ethnic interests, and potential assailants would be aware that he had the 'spiritual power' and would 'think twice before attacking him spiritually'.

Joe and Samuel were hopeful that he would be able to generate loans through the friendships that he made with the wealthier 'sponsors' who also attended the ministry. In Greater Revival Ministry, as well as the younger

Igbo traders, there was also a group of around twenty middle-aged Igbo people, most of whom were 'exporters' and 'importers' who also owned shops in the city. One of the group, Mr Okafor, who responded to the questionnaire survey, was a businessman who was married with three children and came from Ohaffia in Imo State. He and his wife ran a trading firm dealing in a variety of imported electrical goods which they would buy from traders in Lagos or at Aba market and then transport down to sell in their shop in Calabar. Mr Okafor said that he had been a member of the Presbyterian Church before moving to Calabar fifteen years ago and when he first reached Calabar he had first gone to the Presbyterian Church at Henshaw Town. However, he said that he started to feel dissatisfied with the preaching there, because 'the orthodox churches in Calabar have allowed tradition and worldly activities to take over from real preaching...they compromise with well-to-do people who corrupt the church, whereas the Pentecostals do not allow this'. In his opinion, since he left the Presbyterian Church, he had changed the way he led his life, and the transformation had added to his business success. He thought that the Presbyterian Church had not shown him 'how to live' and consequently he had led a 'corrupt life, had girlfriends, fought and did commit a lot of sin', all because he 'lacked the knowledge of the word of God'. Mr Okafor had been invited by a friend to attend a revival service in a Pentecostal ministry down near with Beach in Calabar. It was at the start of 1993 and it was there that he heard Pastor Ohiri preach as a guest preacher.

Like many Pentecostal pastors who travelled to Calabar from villages and small towns of Akwa Ibom State and Imo State to set up ministries, Pastor Ohiri first was assisted by a network of pastors who were mainly from his own ethnic group. When he reached Calabar in 1991 he lodged on the floor of a friend's house and was later joined by his wife who got a job as a domestic science teacher at Edgerley Girl's School¹⁶. He was invited to preach in the ministries of born-again friends from Imo State who lived in

¹⁶Mrs Ohiri did not take up office in the church, although she attended services.

Calabar. During one of the first services Mr Okafor went forward to pray for healing of his leg, injured in a road accident many years before. When his leg was healed he decided to donate 35,000 naira to set up Greater Revival Ministry in a permanent building registered with the Federal Government, with Pastor Ohiri as leader. At the launch of the ministry, Mr Okafor told me that he had praised the pastor who 'teaches the word of God with clarity'. He added that the character of the pastor was of utmost importance because, 'if the pastor of a church is alive it [the church] will definitely reflect upon the members, therefore a lively pastor makes a good church'. The patronage of Igbo business maintained the ministry and the other Igbo preachers who received Pastor Ohiri on his arrival came to preach in the new ministry. For Mr Okafor, sponsoring the ministry had made him more 'disciplined...I read my Bible and know what is the will of God'. Since he joined Greater Revival Ministry he had started to preach there as well and said that it was his ambition to start a ministry of his own in Calabar. He told me that he had recently gained a B.A. degree in Biblical studies, and that he was 'now preaching and teaching the word of God' at Greater Revival Ministry.

By 1994 the ministry had three hundred members and on several occasions Pastor Ohiri told me about the plans that he and the Board of Ministers had for the extension of the ministry overseas as well as in south-east Nigeria. While ethnic networks provided contacts and funds when the ministry was being set up, the ministry was also seeking to ensure links to the global network. The ministers were keen to make connections with global Pentecostal ministries in Britain and the United States and in 1994 Pastor Ohiri managed to get a phone line installed at the room in the compound that was used as the ministry office. Getting a phone line installed was an expensive and long process without the intervention of contacts within NITEL, and so having a phone line indicated wealth or social contacts and often both. Pastor Ohiri was very pleased when the phone line was to be installed and told me how he had arranged the installation with the

assistance of a State official the Commissioner of Education in Cross River State whom he had met whilst preaching at a revival. Once the phone line was connected ministry had headed notepaper printed, including the phone number and a blank space left for a fax number, and this paper was used in important correspondences. Pastor Ohiri owned many pamphlets and books written by Pentecostal preachers in the USA and it was with such ministries that he really wanted to make contact. He said when he felt dispirited by the practical obstacles that he faced in making contact with other ministries he reminded himself that the letters and phone calls were 'not the only form of communication...for a prayer made in Nigeria could go as far as America', the links with Pentecostal ministries overseas provided a route beyond the borders of Nigeria.

At Greater Revival Ministry people from all ethnic groups in the city were participants and the past 'tribalism' that had caused so much conflict in the south-east was condemned as 'backward'. Among the followers there was no overt division into groups based upon ethnicity. The services at the ministry took place in English to incorporate allcomers. There were some songs in Ibibio or Efik, but these were well-known Pentecostal songs that required little detailed knowledge of the language. Participants often stressed that they were 'all brothers and sisters' together, and that being born-again was far more important than their ethnic association. However, because migration to the city did occur in 'chains' whereby the person settled in the city would advance assistance to the newcomer from the village, ethnic association was important to people moving into the city. In the course of settling into the city and expanding business ties with people in the shared ethnic group seem to have been tempered by the social interaction enabled by joining a Pentecostal ministry. Within the ministry ties between people of the same ethnic group continued, such as the links between Joe, Samuel, Pastor Ohiri and Mr Okafor, but these relationships were defined primarily a relationship between born-again converts in the same ministry, rather than members of the same ethnic group.

Overcomers Bible Mission

Born-again networks linked pastors and followers throughout the south-eastern region, cross cutting and encompassing people from different ethnic groups. The following account of the foundation of the Overcomers Bible Mission that was related to me by Pastor Demus Abraham. I relate the story at length because it is important for two reasons. Firstly, the story provides a description of the particular series of events that led up to the start of the ministry, the process of labour migration, the economic disaster in Port Harcourt, the schism from the first ministry and the start of the new ministry in Calabar. Secondly, the story is an account told with the benefit of hindsight. The foundation of the ministry is imparted with an inevitability and sense of certainty through the events of the story in which apparently insurmountable difficulties were miraculously 'overcome'. I relate the story of his move to Calabar in detail as it illustrates the network of social ties of migration to Calabar as well as the processes by which new ministries are formed and seek out affiliation with international Pentecostal organisations.

Demus Abraham had first moved to Calabar as a teenager to attend secondary school. Although his father was a pastor and his mother was a deaconess in the Methodist church, he considered his parents had never 'really converted' to Christianity, they were only 'social churchgoers'. 'Real Christians' he said had had their lives transformed by conversion, and this conversion was evident in their 'changed behaviour' both inside and outside the church. Like other pastors he said he never wanted to preach until he was 'convicted' and 'called' to do so. He said he encountered Pentecostalism for the first time in 1975, then he was 'convicted' as a sinner, but started to 'backslide' after one year and eventually resumed his old 'unreformed' life. In 1979 he claimed an event prophesied his future life as a pastor; an evangelist called at his parents' house and foretold that

their son would be 'called' to the ministry. His parents were pleased at this prophecy, but added that he had not been interested because he considered the vocation of a pastor to be difficult and did not want to suffer financially as his father had done.

Instead, in the early 1980s, Pastor Abraham went to Port Harcourt and worked in a company supplying air-conditioning systems to offices. He was immediately wealthier and soon started his own company. On two further occasions he had a 'call' from God asking him to preach, to 'do what your father couldn't accomplish'. He ignored the call, but soon afterwards misfortunes started to occur. His father died suddenly in 1980 and he heard God again instructing him to 'start from where your father ended'. The calls became more 'insistent' until he felt threatened. He did not want to give up the income that his business yielded. Then in 1984 several events made him reconsider his decision. Firstly, there was what he described as a 'physical happening', when one night he was pushed from his bed and heard a voice telling him to preach. His business began to suffer when the land on which his offices were built was confiscated by the State Governor's office. He received no compensation and when he started another business, the State Government stepped in again and confiscated the land. He reached his lowest point when, with his businesses in ruins, he developed appendicitis and was admitted to hospital. At this point he prayed to God that an operation would not be necessary, as he lacked the funds to pay for it. His prayers were answered and he recovered completely. However his situation had changed completely. His former success had 'evaporated' and he was living in a tiny rented house. Seeing him so despondent some friends invited him to attend the 'Jesus Never Fails Ministry Incorporated'¹⁷.

¹⁷The word 'incorporated' in the name of a Pentecostal church referred to the fact that the church had been registered with the Federal Ministry of Corporate Affairs. The registration procedure had been set up because the new Pentecostal ministries had no other form of regulation. They were not affiliated to large institutions and denominations as the Pentecostal churches of the 1930s had been.

Later a pastor visited him from the Ministry. The pastor had been sent in response to a prophecy that there was a man, called Demus, who wanted to preach. The pastor offered him a position in the Port Harcourt branch of the church. However, Pastor Abraham refused to take up the position as he said he felt that he 'did not merit it'. Then he was financially assisted by other church members and in 1986 joined the ministry and was trained as a pastor. The ministry was based at Ikot Ekpene, but had established branches throughout Rivers State and Akwa Ibom State. Pastor Abraham was trained by the ministry in the rural areas of Rivers State before being sent back to Calabar, Ikot Ekpene and Port Harcourt again. In 1989 he was sent to Calabar to start a branch of the Jesus Never Fails Ministry which expanded rapidly in membership. Then in October 1990, the founder of the Ministry died at the church headquarters in Ikot Ekpene. Pastor Abraham was asked to take over the running of the headquarters by the Board of Governors and he ran the church for a year, with jurisdiction over ten pastors.

However, the death of the founder brought disputes over property and authority, and what he termed a 'constitutional' problem developed. The church was run by a lay Board of Governors and no ministers were included. The lay governors said they employed pastors to work in the church and had the authority to sack pastors. The laity wanted prophecy to direct decisions made about the church. In Pastor Abraham's eyes, the laymen were saying that a decision that was prophesied should be acted upon, whether it had a biblical foundation or not, and that lay Governors were ready to use dreams, or the 'enemies of the church would destroy it'. Pastor Abraham told me he considered the practice of using dreams and prophecies to shape church policy was 'unbiblical' and people should believe that they had protection from evil spirits simply because they were born-again. Pastor Abraham then wrote to the Board of Governors asking them to meet the other ministers and reconcile them and also wrote to the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) asking them to step in and act as

an adjudicator. The Governors refused to settle the issue as he thought fit, continued to permit prophecies and dreams, and refused the PFN intervention. The ministry split in half, the lay governors gathered some ministers with them, while another group of ministers banded together with Pastor Abraham as leader. Then the Governors took Pastor Abraham's group to court, arguing that only one church could claim to be the 'original' church.

Pastor Abraham at this point decided to leave the dispute and went to Calabar alone to pray. He booked into a hotel on the MCC road and although he only had money to pay for two nights there he decided to pray there for thirty-one days and ask God for direction. He heard 'a message from God' urging him to start a church in Calabar, and he agreed. Next day he heard that 'God had spoken' to the owner of the hotel who was another Pentecostal pastor, Reverend Archibong of IBM. He discovered that the Reverend Archibong had paid his outstanding hotel bills and had allowed him to stay there without charge until he had achieved his 'spiritual aim'. He said that God told him that the task was not a 'physical battle' but that the 'weapons of our warfare' were spiritual, to battle with 'principalities and powers' that ruled in Calabar. He resigned from the Jesus Never Fails Ministry and handed over all the property that had been disputed in the court case with the Board of Governors. Pastor Abraham started the Overcomers Bible Mission with a service on July 10th 1992 at the Metropolitan Hotel in Calabar. Pastor Abraham invited other Pentecostalist ministers in the city to attend and a joint photograph was taken to commemorate the occasion. However, he still had no regular salary coming in and asked God to provide him with a church building. He met a landlord who was an 'indigene'¹⁸ of Calabar and wanted to rent out his property. The 'property' was a derelict piece of land 'out in the bush' that had been used as a 'hideout by thieves'. So by the first Sunday after the service at the Metropolitan Hotel, Pastor Demus had a site for the church and in exchange

¹⁸ An indigene being an Efik, Qua or Efut person.

for clearing the derelict site he got the place rent-free for the first three months. He named the church 'Overcomers Bible Mission - For God's Covenant People'.

The assistance Pastor Demus Abraham received from Reverend Archibong, who provided him with accommodation in the hotel and assisted him in finding a site for the church, illustrated the links of patronage that were forged between Pentecostal ministers. In this case the relation between Efik patron and Ibibio migrant, based on ownership of land and property by Reverend Archibong, could be seen as another example of the way in which indigenes host and co-opt the business ventures that are introduced by migrants. The 'launching' of the ministry at the Metropolitan Hotel was a part of that patronage and introduced the Pastor to many other Pentecostal ministers whom he befriended. Marshall has argued that the sponsorship that occurs within the born-again movement has 'reconstructed disintegrations such as the breakdown of many patron-client networks in the eighties' (1993:234). The patronage of Reverend Archibong undoubtedly hastened the establishment of the ministry, although the derelict site in the city centre of Calabar near Watt Market was not prestigious. There were two makeshift sheds and a canopy covered an open area where the services were held and during the rainy season water constantly leaked through the roofing and drenched the concrete floors. The establishment of Overcomers Bible Mission also indicated the same concern to institutionalise the church as occurred at Greater Revival Ministry. The ministry ran a formal schedule. On Sundays there was Sunday School at 8.30 a.m. for children. At 10 a.m. on a Sunday there was the Divine Praise Worship Service, the largest service of the week. Posts within the ministry were formalised, while the service was held the children could be cared for at the Children Church Department by 'trained church workers' who occupied the children 'with interesting lessons and educating activities till the adult service is over'. On Tuesdays at 5.30 p.m. there was Bible Study, where adults were taught 'Bible knowledge' and on Thursdays

at 5.30 p.m. there was the 'Holy Ghost Power Line', a miracle and deliverance service.

Like Reverend Archibong, Pastor Demus preached the prosperity gospel and his narrative tells us several things about the way that prosperity preachers represented their financial success. The ups and downs of his business fortunes are stabilised by his conversion, he no longer suffers from the fear of the unpredictability of the economy he experienced in Port Harcourt. However, at the same time, Pastor Abraham emphasised that being a pastor does not entail the life of poverty that his father experienced as a pastor in a Holiness Pentecostal church, on the contrary, he gained a large and reliable income from preaching and was, he said, no longer worried about where the next installment would come from as he lived in the certainty that 'God would provide'.

Intercessors Bible Mission, IBM

Reverend Archibong and the several Efik people who were members of IBM were considered unusual in Calabar, because both migrants and indigenes often perceived the Efiks as 'very traditional' people who were usually 'just nominal Christians'. Nearly all the ministries were founded by first or second generation migrants from the hinterland, usually by Ibibio and Igbo people, who often said that they had decided to set up churches in Calabar because they thought that the indigenous population was in 'need of deliverance' from 'demonic spirits'. Migrants who arrived in Calabar and became born-again also often attributed their leaving an orthodox church to the 'spiritual threat' that they faced in Calabar. It was highly unusual for a church to be founded by an indigene, especially an indigene from a high ranking 'royal' family such as Archibong House. Many migrants said that usually indigenes were only interested in Pentecostal ministries for the

money they could make out of renting land to them. An examination of the IBM ministry provides an indigenous perspective on the way that ethnic differences were addressed by Pentecostals in Calabar. The ministry was one of the few to be founded by an indigene, but had quickly become one of the most successful.

The Intercessors Bible Mission (IBM) was founded by Reverend Engineer Archibong in 1992. By 1993 IBM had amassed a following of between five and six hundred people¹⁹. Before I first went to IBM I heard from several people that it was a wealthy ministry. The compound was located in an expensive part of the city, and Reverend Archibong had enough funds to make overseas trips, and had recently been on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Followers at IBM often said that because Reverend Archibong was an Efik he was 'very strong' in dealing with 'problems caused by traditional spirits' in Calabar because he had been born into a 'traditional Calabar family' and was only born-again in the 1980s. He told me that he came from a 'nominal Christian family' as his parents had 'just attended' the Christ African Church and had not 'really worshipped' God. The Archibong family was a royal Efik family from *Obutong* (Old Town) in Calabar. Reverend Archibong was born in Calabar in 1950 and had first attended primary school in Calabar. However, when his mother died in 1956 he was sent to Lagos to stay with a maternal cousin. He attended secondary school and then read civil engineering at the Polytechnic in Lagos before returning to Calabar in his twenties, where he married and had children. Up until the mid 1980s Reverend Archibong said that he had had a stable career and 'did not question his life that much'. He had been employed by the Federal Government for sixteen years as a civil engineer in the Ministry of Works²⁰.

¹⁹Details of daily attendance were kept at IBM. For example, the figures for Sunday 11th September 1994. There was a total of 584 people who went to the service that day, comprising of 144 men, 196 women, 120 boys and 144 girls. Fourteen people attended for the first time (5 men and 9 women) and there were thirteen new converts (5 men and 8 women). A new convert was someone who said that they had been born-again that day.

²⁰ In the late 1970s and early 1980s there was ample oil money available for the construction of large infrastructure projects throughout Nigeria. Many of the tarred roads in Calabar and Cross River State were constructed at this time.

During the 1980s some business associates invited him to a meeting of the Full Gospel Businessmen's' Fellowship (FHBMF) in Calabar. Reverend Archibong started to attend the meetings and became born-again. For three consecutive years he was the President of the FGBMF, then, in the early 1990s started an interdenominational ministry called the United Army of the Lord.

One year after starting the United Army of the Lord, Reverend Archibong said that 'the Lord called me into pastoring' for while praying he had 'received divine instruction to start planting a church' and he founded IBM in August 1992. Reverend Archibong and many of his followers considered that the differences between local ethnic groups were realised through the 'traditional religious practices' that conferred personhood, most commonly through initiation into traditional societies²¹. Reverend Archibong argued that 'the Efiks were the worst' for perpetuating traditional ceremonies and perpetuating the 'problem of indigenous spirits'. Reverend Archibong told me that as an Efik 'royal' family member he was unusual as a Pentecostal pastor, for there were very few pastors who came from 'royal' Efik families²². Reverend Archibong claimed his initiation into the *ekpe* secret society gave him a privileged understanding of the workings of 'traditional demons' in Efik culture in Calabar. He told me that 'up to 1989 the churches were moving back²³ and there was nothing like a revival as of when I gave my life' (became born-again). I cannot see more than three or more people of my level who gave their life'. By 'his level' he meant 'that is with my status, my social status...that is, the people I know, young men and even the old men...I mean the indigenes' and added that 'there were other churches here but the churches were primarily made up of people from outside, not the indigenes...not the Efiks, not even the Quas'. The

²¹For men in the *ekpe* society and women in the *ndem* cult.

²²This seemed fewer Efik people than Ibibio, Igbo people in Calabar. However most royal Efiks continued to participate in traditional ceremonies, even if only at family occasions. Being a pastor meant that Pastor Archibong had withdrawn from those social occasions.

²³By 'moving back' he said that he meant declining in membership but again he used a spatial metaphor to describe the decline in terms of a 'retreat' from the 'battle with traditionalism'.

indigenes did not start Pentecostal churches, and often did not attend them either, because they were involved in 'traditional religion', 'we became so notorious in traditional things, so the effect of the Devil became multiplied...we were unconscious agents of the Devil, we all served the Devil because we were all so interested in traditional things'. The knowledge that Reverend Archibong claimed about the *ekpe* society did draw in several ex-initiates into the ministry. He argued that he could annul the 'curses' that were heaped upon those that left the secret society. However, many other followers at IBM, like Okon Ukpang who I discuss later in this section, continued to be members of the *ekpe* society.

IBM was well known by Pentecostals in Calabar as a ministry for the wealthier inhabitants of the city. The IBM compound was on the outskirts of the city, alongside the highway that runs north out of Calabar. Nearby were the offices of the Cross River State Secretariat and 'State Housing', the suburban housing estate that had been built in the late 1970s to accommodate Government employees²⁴. The ministry compound had been built to the west of the highway, on a large tract of land owned by the State Government. The IBM buildings were conspicuous. Only a few houses could be seen in the distance along the road leading down to the naval yards on the Calabar River. From the road the interior of the compound was not visible as high concrete walls surrounded the site. There were two entrances with heavy metal doors led into the yard adjacent to the church building, while behind the other set of doors, more ornately decorated, was the 'storey building' where the pastor and his family lived²⁵. Access to different areas of the compound was carefully monitored by the pastor and lay stewards. Outside the family house there was a garden and a garage where the two Mercedes Benz cars belonging to the ministry were parked. On the other side of the compound there was the church building. I interviewed the

²⁴The State Housing was for State employees. However, many state employees were awaiting salaries and the petty traders and kerosene queues that were a familiar sight in poorer areas of the city were flourishing in State Housing.

²⁵Most buildings in Calabar were at ground level. 'Storey' buildings, with more than one level, were considered to be 'more modern' by many people in the city.

Reverend Engineer Archibong on several occasions in the church offices in the IBM church building which were filled with business furniture that indicated the high social status he claimed²⁶. Each time I interviewed the pastor I would have to make an appointment with his secretary. When I arrived at the ministry on the day of the appointment I would be asked to wait in the secretary's office. Other people who were waiting to see the pastor were sitting on chairs around the room. After some delay, I would be shown into the office and would be given about an hour to carry out the interview. The office was a large, rectangular room, almost completely empty of furniture, the floor completely covered by a red carpet. The walls had been painted white and decorated with several pictures. The most prominent was a diagram which indicated the movement of 'the centre of revival' in Christianity from the Holy Land, to Europe, the United States and then 'in the present time' to Africa. On the other side of the room were photographs, some of which showed the different services at IBM while others were pictures taken during the pilgrimage that Reverend Archibong had recently made to Jerusalem²⁷. A few expensive looking ornaments decorated his desk, alongside an executive penholder and a telephone, which would ring at regular intervals²⁸.

Reverend Archibong who was assisted by a hierarchy of ordained and lay office-holders. As Overseer and President, Reverend Archibong had overall authority over the ministry²⁹. Reverend Archibong and other ministers preached. Each church had lay office holders who were the 'family prayer

²⁶A main large room on the ground floor of the family house was used to entertain people after the services. The room had several large ornate upholstered sofas and a large television and stereo. Inside the church building was a room with chairs round the walls that was used as a 'waiting room' for individuals who wanted to meet the pastor.

²⁷Many Pentecostals in Nigeria were keen to go on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and often compared the journey with the Muslim *haji*, to Mecca. In Nigeria the Federal Government provides state funding for Muslims to go on the *haji*, and Pentecostal Christians often pointed out to me that they were not getting the same subsidies. The pilgrimage to Jerusalem was becoming more popular among Pentecostals.

²⁸A working telephone was rare in Calabar. Few households had a telephone and in several parts of the city the connections to the telephone system were damaged. The telephone indicated high status of the ministry.

²⁹Pastor Archibong had also affiliated IBM to the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) and had become Vice-President of the Cross River State branch.

cell leaders' and 'ministry workers' and who provided organised prayer groups at local settings³⁰. At IBM Reverend Archibong's claim that the Pentecostals 'owned Calabar' proved popular with those migrants and indigenes who had once had government employment but were losing jobs after the end of the transition government, and with some indigenous followers who had once been initiates of the *ekpe* society. Most prominent at services were the vocal members who considered themselves to be the Calabar professional elite, many of whom were once employed in the public sector. The followers I met at services included university professors, headteachers, and businessmen, as well as government administrators, school-teachers, nurses and doctors. Many of the professionals in the IBM followers lived nearby the church in 'State Housing' in detached large houses with gardens, expensive furnishings, carpets, televisions and cars. Indeed, during 1993-5, the professional elite started to be seen by many Pentecostals to characterise IBM. Reverend Engineer Archibong described IBM to me in an interview as an 'elitic' ministry that catered especially for the professional and business elites in Calabar. The ministry had started in the last year of transition government, and several civilian politicians joined IBM in 1994. 'Different ministries', Reverend Archibong often repeated, 'have different callings', and he added that 'God calls people into different areas and we have this elitic, more or less, church. We have professors, civil engineers, doctors, they are coming here'. He once said that 'by the grace of God' there were fewer people from the labouring and unskilled employment, such as mechanics and motorcycle taxi drivers, *alaloks*. Indeed there were no longer any *alaloks* in the fellowship, although there had been when the ministry first opened. There were two members of the fellowship who owned motorbike taxis, but Reverend Archibong told me that he wanted to emphasise that they did not work as motorcyclists themselves, rather they hired the motorbikes out to other people to drive.

³⁰Other officials called zonal leaders and area leaders co-ordinated the different branches of the church. Since 1992 IBM had expanded to start 'branches' in Akpabuyo, Etinan and Ugep.

That IBM was a ministry that 'catered for the social elite' was indicated by several aspects of the location of the ministry and the services. Many followers lived on the residential State Housing that covered several square miles in the north of the city. Grace ran a business centre on the outskirts of Calabar which provided photocopying, fax machine, typing and telephones and employed around six people. The centre was successful and many businesses and churches had publicity material printed there. Another woman follower owned a popular Chinese restaurant in State Housing that served European and Chinese food.

Members of the ministry who lived on the more exclusive State Housing had a cheaper bike ride, or drove to the services. The ministry was situated about three miles outside the city centre, so people living in the town centre had to pay for transport to get there. There was a minibus service that cost about five naira and a taxi bike ride that cost between five and ten naira, and followers from the city centre often had to pay for the round trip several times a week. Despite the recent shortages of government revenue, the elite always owned other sources of income. For many Efiks this came from renting out land or properties. The Boxing Day pledges at the church came to 35,000 naira in total, money that was handed in during the first month of the year, a time when people were often short of money. There was a large car park at the IBM ministry which was often full with around twenty cars. Each car would carry many people, so around half the fellowship could arrive by car. Undoubtedly the need to pay for transport to IBM discouraged many people living in the city centre from attending the ministry. Another marker of the kind of education common within the IBM fellowship was the fact that the whole service was always conducted in English and I did not meet anyone at IBM who could not both write and speak English fluently. Reverend Archibong said he used English rather than an 'ethnic language' because it was inclusive, people from anywhere in Nigeria shared knowledge of English. However, speaking fluent English

was also an indication of 'educated' and 'exposed' status in Calabar, and preaching solely in English assumed a certain level of educational attainment and aspiration.

The followers at IBM were mainly Ibibio and Igbo people as in other Pentecostal ministries. However, several Efik followers said that they went to IBM because they thought that, as an indigene himself, Pastor Archibong could understand the workings of the 'traditionalists' in the city. For example, Afiong was a woman in her late twenties who considered herself to be Efik as her father was from the royal Eyamba family. She was born and brought up in Calabar and her parents had attended the Christ African Church on MacDonald Street in Calabar, where Pastor Archibong and his family also attended. On her mother's side her family were Ibibio, but because descent was traced through the male line, she was a member of the Efik *Eyamba* house. She married a Lebanese man in her early twenties. She moved to live in his compound and had two children there, enjoying a wealthy lifestyle with trips to Britain and expensive housing and food in Calabar. When I met Afiong she was living apart from her husband and involved in a lengthy court case with him about the amount of money he should provide for school fees for their two children aged five and seven. She had moved back into the house owned by her maternal relatives and was living on money from her ex-husband and the income that she gained from trading stationery and other small items. She did not work hard at the trading job which gave rise to comments from her maternal family that she did not work very hard. Afiong's life was full of conflict at that time, and in the last months of 1993 she started going to IBM because she had heard that the pastor 'had power' to protect people against the 'spiritual attack' that she thought was so common in Calabar. Like many other followers at IBM, Afiong belonged to the elite group who had travelled outside Calabar or Nigeria and were 'exposed' to Western ways.

Another member of IBM who could be considered part of the elite group was Okon Ukpong. He was our neighbour in Calabar and was going to IBM at the start of 1994. He was a sculptor who had trained at Yaba College of Art and whose family had migrated to Calabar from Enyong Creek in Akwa Ibom State via Lagos³¹. He said that his lineage and the other lineages based in Enyong were Efik lineages, but said that recently, over the last ten years, some Efik historians had been defining the people of Enyong Creek as Ibibio rather than Efik. Okon had been a member of the *ekpe* society for many years and when we first met him he had just finished working on a large concrete statue of an *ekpe idem*, masquerader. The statue had been commissioned by the Cross River State government, who was erecting concrete sculptures of 'traditional' *ekombi* dancers and *ekpe* masqueraders to decorate road junctions. The *ekombi* girl stood on the highway, but since State government funds dwindled there was no money to pay for the commission. So he had decided to keep it in his garage until they came up with the money. He was in his mid-forties and lived with his wife and their two small children next door. Okon's wife, Ima, was in her late twenties and never went to IBM with him, instead she attended the Apostolic Church that was just down the road from their house in the centre of the town. Like most Pentecostals, Okon never expected his spouse to attend church with him, and it was common for each member of a family to go to a different church. By the end of 1994 Okon had left IBM and became involved in the running of a new Pentecostal ministry that opened in a school right across the road from his house. He said the increase in petrol prices had made the journey to IBM in his car too expensive.

The most striking fact about IBM was the way that the ministry had become known as the church for the elite in a very short time after its opening. It was the most opulent ministry I attended in Calabar, in terms of the buildings and the location. There were powerful and wealthy people among

³¹Okon was one of many people in the ministry with secondary education. All were literate. A woman trader at IBM said she left school with a few examinations, and attending the church improved her education.

the following, several of whom had converted from the Presbyterian and Catholic churches. IBM members as a whole were wealthier than those people who went to Overcomers Bible Mission, Liberty Gospel Ministry or Greater Revival Ministry. Marshall has noted the 'egalitarian' social relations between members of born-again ministries, indicated by the use of 'sister' and 'brother' as informal terms of address (1993:224). These forms of address were used in IBM and there was a consensus that the people in the fellowship were 'united' and 'that everyone had the same status before God'. However, while the members at IBM were equals, an 'elite' status was claimed with regard to other Pentecostal ministries. This elite status was also expressed using kinship metaphors. In IBM, and other ministries in Calabar, the language of fictive kinship was extended to incorporate concepts of lineage and descent. The act of conversion was often said to have brought the person within a new immediate family of 'brothers and sisters' and also part of a new lineage. Being in a new lineage was taken to imply that the convert was a descendant who inherited the right to 'spiritual blessings'. IBM was considered linked to high places by the followers, whether through the knowledge of the 'evils' of the traditional hierarchy provided by Reverend Archibong and the other Efiks, or knowledge of the 'corruption' of State Government provided by the democratic Deputy Governor of 1991 Cecilia Ekpennyong. However, this knowledge of the workings of the elite in turn fuelled criticism from people in Liberty Gospel Ministry and Greater Revival Ministry who argued that the knowledge of elite circles by IBM followers was tantamount to their continuing involvement in the circles. The connections between elite power and the satanic realm that are so commonly stated in Pentecostal ministries, especially holiness churches such as Liberty Gospel Ministry (Marshall 1993:226), seemed to make many Pentecostals more likely to question the initial success of IBM. Further discussions of the changing perceptions of IBM are provided in the next chapter.

Liberty Gospel Ministry

Women's experiences of urban employment

At IBM, Overcomers Bible Mission, Greater Revival Ministry and Liberty Gospel Ministry, as in most Pentecostal ministries and orthodox denominations, around two thirds of the followers were women. Here I consider how indigenous and migrant women considered that joining a ministry addressed the concerns of urban employment. Representations of the 'proper comportment' of women marked boundaries between the 'saved' within the ministry and the 'unsaved' beyond the ministry and I argue that the negotiation of these boundaries expressed an ambivalence towards the changing dynamics of gender relations in a 'modern' urban context. The religious leadership that women exercised in many Pentecostal ministries stood in contrast to the exclusion of women from ministerial office in many of the early Pentecostal ministries and the orthodox churches³². Women Pentecostals in Calabar founded ministries and were recognised as 'leaders' and occupied ministerial office, in contrast to women in Pentecostal fellowships in Columbia (Gill 1990) and Sicily (Cucchiari 1990). Gill (1990), Cucchiari (1990) and Toulis (1997) have all argued that within Pentecostal ministries inequalities in gender relations in social life outside the ministry can be challenged by the 'spiritual egalitarianism' in which men and women speak with the 'ultimate authority' of the Holy Spirit. Pentecostal women followers in Calabar would often point to the active ministerial roles that women played in the Pentecostal movement, as opposed to the marginal roles they occupied in 'traditional' orthodox churches,³³ in 'traditional' government, state government and federal government³⁴. Cucchiari (1990:707) has described

³² And also challenged the hierarchies within 'traditional' government in Calabar.

³³ In Calabar women generally formed two thirds of the Pentecostal fellowship, the same proportion as orthodox churches, but also founded ministries and occupied ministerial posts.

³⁴ In traditional hierarchy, women could not be an *Obong* or an *etubom*. The *etuboms* made up the Council of *Etuboms*, highest body in traditional government. Women were given honorary chieftaincy titles and sat on the *Obong's* Council.

Pentecostalism in southern Italy as a 'gender system in the making...that combines new structures with aspects of the failing hegemonic system' showing how southern Italian Pentecostals perpetuated within the ministries the hierarchical organisational structures found in wider society. Both women and men could receive 'spiritual gifts', but women were 'barred from all categories of formal ministry...teaching, preaching, evangelism, healing and prophecy' and only men could be ordained (1990:703). In all the ministries I visited in Calabar both men and women could receive 'spiritual gifts', however there were variations in the extent to which women took up ministerial office. It was not uncommon for women to start ministries and to lead them. In some ministries women did not appear to preach, although in all ministries I went to in Calabar women did present testimonies standing at the front of the hall and spoke at length.

I draw upon the case study of Mrs Ukpabio³⁵ and the people who attended her ministry in the following discussion of the negotiation of gender identities for two main reasons. Firstly, Mrs Ukpabio was a successful woman preacher in a religious movement in which most preachers were men, although there were several other women preaching one of whom I discuss in the next chapter. Certainly women were able to found and lead churches but as preachers and ordinary members their participation in the ministries was subject to greater debate. My second reason for focussing on Liberty Gospel Ministry is that it was a holiness church and the 'comportment' of women was the subject of debate among the different churches in the holiness movement. The Liberty Gospel Ministry³⁶ was founded in August 1992. The Liberty Gospel Church was just one part of

³⁵One example of a distinction was in the different titles given to men and women 'preachers'. Women leaders were never known as 'pastor', or 'preacher', terms which emphasised the duties, but rather 'evangelist', 'sister'.

³⁶Pentecostal ministries in Calabar often used the term ministry to refer to the 'whole organisation', a bit like a company. Within that ministry there would be specific sections, printing press, church, school, nursery, and so on. Many people who attended the Liberty Gospel Ministry services called the place Liberty Gospel Ministry so I have kept that usage when quoting them. Other Pentecostals did object to the use of the word church saying that it was of the orthodox movement and identified the organisation rather than the 'power' within it.

the ministry, and in 1995 Mrs Ukpabio told me she planned to build a Bible College, a nursery, a secondary school, a printing press and a missionary department. During Sunday services the hall was completely full, often there were only a few seats empty at the back of the hall. Whereas Pentecostal ministries in Calabar had three to four hundred followers, Liberty Gospel Church had a membership of over two thousand people³⁷ and the Sunday service was held in two shifts. Mrs Ukpabio defined her ministry as a 'holiness church' and was critical of the prosperity gospel preached in other ministries.

I first met Mrs Ukpabio at the office of her church on Target Street in the centre of Calabar. The large church building had once been a cinema and the old ticket office room at the entrance was Mrs Ukpabio's office from where she administered the church and provided 'deliverance' for church members. There were no aspects of the ministerial role that Mrs Ukpabio did not participate in, she preached the sermon, did healing and miracles services and received prophesies. Her husband was also a preacher and assisted with the running of the church but Mrs Ukpabio was clearly acknowledged as the leader. When I asked her about the obstacles she had faced in becoming a church leader Mrs Ukpabio told me that she did not think women found it harder to become preachers, because;

if you are inspired, womanhood doesn't matter, and all other people seem smaller...if you are inspired, you don't think of being a woman, in the church you have found the spirit of God, the word has power, as you are speaking out so you become so mighty, as you are speaking it seems you are growing up to a giant, everybody there will look so tiny in your eyes, because you are inspired, you'll not be shy, you do not fear 'I am a woman', you'll not even recognise yourself as a women. It's meant for everyone³⁸.

When I asked her whether men preached in the services she replied that she 'gave them

³⁷ Most of the followers walked to church or took a cheap *alalok* taxi.

³⁸ Toulis (1997) has argued that men and women 'infilled' with the Spirit become ungendered beings, that were called 'saints' in the ministry she studied in Birmingham.

the chance, I don't preach everytime, I schedule it, some days the men will preach, then sometimes I preach'.

Mrs Ukpabio argued that in orthodox churches women in general had less of a voice, particularly younger women because a few of the older ones retained greater control through organisations such as the Women's Guild, so she concluded, 'the women there are weak, but the young ones will be stronger'. She said that she often allows men to preach in the services, but emphasised that they recognise that she is the one that has 'power',³⁹ and this was evident in her control over the church organisation. Mr and Mrs Ukpabio ran the whole ministry, and did not delegate authority to assistant pastors. Mrs Ukpabio explained this decision saying that 'if you tell someone they are an assistant pastor he will lose sight of the job and start maintaining posts. So we just create small departments, so they don't know who they are, but they are doing the work of assistant pastors'. An extensive administration system monitored the details of every member of the church⁴⁰. Mrs Ukpabio did delegate the work of evangelism among the followers and as part of this organisation divided the territory of the 'Calabar zone' into 'twelve tribes'. New members were identified as belonging to a certain 'tribe' on the first day that they attended the church and filled in the membership form. Mrs Ukpabio stated that 'we identify you and give your form to your tribal leader, who will fish you out the same day and follow you up. A lot of people will follow you up'. Church members would be sent to go and visit the new member and encourage them to make a return visit to the church. Mrs Ukpabio concluded that 'as they follow you up they get you established in the truth, and push you forward to work and stay in the church so we know you. So that is the purpose of the tribe to reach everyone in the church'. Mrs Ukpabio added that 'each of these tribes is just for us to know people, you can come in here and get lost. It's a new church and people are coming in so many we don't

³⁹About forty five per cent of the following at Liberty Gospel Ministry were men.

know'. The definition of the ministry as a collection of 'tribes of Israel' reflected the concern with constructing new social groups in the ministry.

Like IBM, at Liberty Gospel Ministry the metaphors of lineage and descent were also used to talk about the conversion process. Conversion to the ministry was also described as joining a new lineage, but the conversion was also said to transform the convert from being a 'slave' to being a 'son'. A 'slave' had no claim on the blessings enjoyed by converts. Instead they were chained to the worship of traditional spirits, and every material gain they made only came after great sacrifices were made to these spirits. In contrast, the convert 'son' was entitled to inherit property. There were clear echoes of the impact of the slave-trade in Calabar, in which the Ibibio and Igbo had been captured as slaves and the Efik had traded slaves with the Europeans and claimed social superiority as 'freeborn' people. In 1990s, Pentecostals often represented the 'slaves' in Calabar as those people who continued to observe traditional religious practices and were not born-again. At Liberty Gospel Ministry, Mrs Ukpabio also said that a born-again person was brought into a 'royal lineage', for 'if you are born-again, your lineage has changed and you become a member of a 'royal family' and a 'royal priesthood'⁴¹.

Mrs Ukpabio had become famous in Calabar after publishing an account of her past membership of the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star⁴². Like all born again converts, Mrs Ukpabio emphasised her 'sinful' ways before conversion. Indeed most converts said that the greater the sin before conversion the greater the strength of the conversion that followed. On several occasions when we were talking together, Mrs Ukpabio spoke to me

⁴⁰On one occasion when I went to the church one morning to meet Mrs Ukpabio I found two assistants sorting out all the files for the membership. Two rows of chairs were piled high with files that recorded the 'spiritual counselling' sessions held each week.

⁴¹ This was in contrast to the way that Efik members at IBM represented Pentecostal royalty. At one crowded Sunday service, Mrs Ekpenyoung was given a seat at the very front of the hall, called 'the royal box' by other people at the church.

about her childhood and how she became an evangelist. She told me that she had been born into an Ibibio family from Akwa Ibom State in November 1964, but her family had left Akwa Ibom when she was small when her father got a job as a policeman in Lagos. Mrs Ukpabio was brought up in the police barracks in Lagos where she went to Jinadu girl's school up to primary five and started secondary school. However, she was 'a rebellious child against her family', she refused to study hard and stayed out with her friends. At the age of nine when she went to Fela Kuti's 'Shrine', a nightclub, and her father decided to send her back to his village at Ikot Ekpene. Because her family was Methodists she attended the Methodist Girls' Secondary School in Ikot Ekpene for five years, then in 1979 she went to live with the family of her late paternal uncle in Calabar. At her uncle's house she said that 'life was easy' for 'she had everything she needed and wanted nothing' and so realised that 'it was boredom and mere curiosity' that pushed her to start attending a new church. Mrs Ukpabio claimed that the Methodist church had not taught her to 'really understand the powers of the Holy Spirit', and because she knew the Bible story only as 'fairytale' this 'lack of knowledge' predisposed her to 'experiment' and attend different churches, even though 'she was not looking for anything in particular'. In August 1979 a classmate told her that 'God had come' to Calabar, and invited her to go with her to Ambo Street to see him. She was curious and they went to the compound of the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star. She said that she was 'impressed' by the Brotherhood, the 'simplicity' and 'authority' of the leader Olumba Olumba Obu, and by the people who were visiting Ambo Street from all over the world⁴³. She soon joined the Brotherhood, went live at Ambo Street and was 'initiated' into the 'inner circles' of the Brotherhood. In 1992 she published *The Seat of Satan Exposed*, an account of her membership of the

⁴²One Pentecostalist told me that until the early 1980s, 'eight out of ten people you passed on the Calabar Road' wore the white robes of Brotherhood members. Many Brotherhood members had since joined Pentecostal ministries.

⁴³She said she was puzzled why Olumba Olumba Obu could not speak English and only preached in Efik. She reasoned that because the first Bible translation for the Cross River region had been in Efik, God might have chosen Efik as a 'favoured language'.

Brotherhood of the Cross and Star and her realisation that the 'powers' of the Brotherhood were derived from 'traditional water spirits' in Calabar. In 1984 said she had started to 'testify' against the Brotherhood and around the time the first of the new Pentecostal ministries started in Calabar⁴⁴.

In other ministries women did not occupy ministerial roles, though at IBM women were active in testimony and often used the church to organise informal meetings. At IBM, as elsewhere, both women and men followers were equally likely to receive 'spiritual gifts' of the 'baptism of the spirit' during the fellowship⁴⁵. Women followers also participated in the running of the church as stewards, nursery school teachers, and as 'family cell leaders' who 'evangelised' among their neighbours and family at home. However, there were no women preaching as 'ministers' in IBM⁴⁶. Women followers were usually given jobs that were considered to be 'women's work' such as running the nursery school and typing. There was also a typist employed by the ministry who would also manage the people who came to visit the pastor. She said that her job at IBM involved similar tasks to the jobs she had done in her last job in a computer centre. She was responsible for typing church documents, recording and filing membership details, preparing sermons and handouts for Bible study and for services. She typed letters and organised the pastor's correspondence and made appointments for followers and other people who wanted to meet the pastor. At the other end of the church building there was a corridor with several rooms that were used for the nursery school that the church had started.

⁴⁴An American pastor, de Angelez, had a crusade in Calabar and there was 'spiritual confrontation' with Olumba.

⁴⁵Differences in gender were also cross cut by differences in age. Most adults I spoke to at the ministry were aged between twenty and fifty years. There were very few men or women aged over sixty. Among the followers aged over sixty the majority were women, while among the younger followers aged between fifteen and thirty there was almost an equal balance between men and women. This contrasted with congregations at orthodox churches, like the Presbyterian Church or the Catholic Church where a far larger section of people would be over fifty.

⁴⁶Pentecostal churches were started by women, such as Helen Ukpabio and Elizabeth Ecoma, but when women led churches they were known by the title 'evangelist' and not 'pastor' or 'minister'. The latter titles were only used to refer to men. I asked followers why they responded that these titles had been taken from the orthodox churches in which there were no ordained women.

When I visited the ministry in the afternoon there would be around thirty children divided into the two classrooms⁴⁷.

At Overcomers Bible Mission I did not see a woman preach at a formal service, although women followers would often preach to the informal meetings of women and men who would congregate in the church compound during the afternoon and early evenings at times when no services were being held. Women often said that the ministry compound provided a 'respectable' meeting place outside the house that they could go to unaccompanied by men. At Overcomers Bible Mission a small group of around ten people, men and women, would often congregate and each person would take turns to stand at the front and lead the prayers and songs. Women followers also said that the territory of the ministry was a 'protected' zone, free from 'spiritual attack' where they would go if they were feeling unwell or were worried about a member of their family. The way Overcomers Bible Mission addressed the concerns of women migrants was described by a young woman whom I met often at the ministry and interviewed on several occasions. Valerie was an Ibibio woman in her early twenties from Ediba, a small town about 100 kilometres to the north of Calabar near Ugep in Cross River State. In Calabar she worked in a business centre, where she typed letters and charged for phone calls. I first met Valerie when I went there on several occasions to make international calls. We became friendly and one day she invited me back to the house where she was lodging. At that time she was going to the Apostolic Church and was lodging in the house of a pastor and his family, a small building without running water that was made with mud walls that stood behind the concrete houses alongside the street. She told me that she paid no rent, but worked in the house cleaning and helped to look after the children. Her room was tiny, filled with clothes on a rail, small bed, and her books and photo albums, which contained family photos and studio photos taken of her striking fashionable poses in western dresses.

⁴⁷Teachers had not been paid by state government.

She told me that when she had first arrived in Calabar she had felt very lonely and isolated from other people, and joining the Apostolic Church had introduced her to friends that she felt she could trust. As a child she had been baptised into the Presbyterian Church, but when she was seven she was sent by her family to Kaduna to live with an auntie there she started going to the Apostolic Church with her auntie. Her family travelled to Kaduna to join her later and they stayed with her aunt there for several years. She was earning a good income and she felt that at this stage in her life she had 'lacked nothing'. However, when the family returned to Ediba they were poorer. Her father had died and her mother could not help her financially. So she decided to go to find work in Calabar alone and travelled back to Ediba about twice a year to visit her mother and younger siblings when she had saved up enough money. She said then 'sometimes I turned to God and started praying...I really talked to God, and God could pass through somebody to help'. Then a friend invited her to Overcomers Bible Mission soon after it opened and she said that she 'liked the way that they were fellowshiping, I was moved...I formerly wasn't born-again, I was just religious'. At the first service she attended the pastor had preached on Abraham; 'God asked Abraham to leave his father and mother and go to a land that he didn't even know...he obeyed and he left and then God prospered him, so the pastor says it is not right to live our life as if we owned it...and that it is not wise to lean on our own understanding'. There was an altar call and she became born-again.

Valerie went to church about four times a week and said that the experience of meeting the other followers had 'changed her'. She still thought that her life was precarious but she 'knew God would provide' and she no longer felt alone. Looking back to her childhood in the Presbyterian Church she said that she enjoyed church but now knew that the congregation had 'not really worshipped God' and that 'back home after the service, they just lived their normal lives', and did not 'practice what they preached'. She

thought her family had 'gone to church as a habit' rather than because they 'really believed'. She saw the Overcomers Bible Mission as a chance to 'change her life' through meeting 'people' and she hoped to meet a wealthy benefactor or her husband there and have children. She told me that, like many other women at Overcomers Bible Mission, she went to the ministry because prayer and inspiration helped her solve her problems and she thought that this was the case for other women in the fellowship. She said that, 'women go to church because they have a problem, they may be barren, or looking for a husband. They may come from a poor family and need sponsoring by wealthier people they might meet at the fellowship or through the use of church funds. Like me, I go to church when I have a problem I have someone to talk to. Before I just cry on my bed alone'. She added that attending the church had given her a new faith in the fact that solutions would be found to her problems. She said that she was aware that 'God sometimes delays in answering our prayers to see the level of our faithfulness'.

Gender relations were changed by the new forms of employment available to women and men in the urban context and many women in Calabar like Valerie had travelled to the city to attend secondary school or find work. Most of the young women I met who had migrated to Calabar lodged with members of their extended family, while other single and married women with families rented rooms in a compound. Nuclear family units have been more common in larger West African cities since the 1960s (Little and Price 1967). However, in Calabar only the wealthier Pentecostal pastors and followers lived in nuclear family units and most people lived in households made up of extended family members with other families renting spare rooms. In Calabar the many single and married women who were looking for work and who lodged with relatives heightened debates about 'proper standards of female behaviour' which were of concern within Pentecostal circles. The city offered women opportunities for work and education but also the possibilities of new styles of clothing 'modern' or western dress,

and entertainment (Caldwell 1969, Little 1973, Obbo 1980:6-16). Within Pentecostalist ministries women were exhorted to obey their husbands and wear 'modest' clothing and behave with respectable 'comportment' and Pentecostal women were characterised within the ministry as women who 'behaved with decorum', dressed smartly but modestly, did not smoke nor drink and did not spend time in bars. The concern expressed by many men and women in the Pentecostal ministries did present dilemmas for women looking for employment in Calabar. Many of the jobs available for women in the city were in petty trading, or in bar work.

Patience was a neighbour in Calabar whose search for a job in the city highlighted the contradictions between Pentecostal concerns with comportment and the need of followers to find employment available in a modern urban centre. I first went to Greater Revival Ministry when I was invited by Patience, who was a neighbour from a nearby compound. I became friendly with her and her family and one day as we chatted she invited me to go with them to attend their ministry⁴⁸. Through the ministry, Patience told me that she had got to know many new people in her neighbourhood who had 'made her feel welcome' as a newcomer by visiting her and bringing her small gifts of food. Patience was in her thirties and was married with two small children, one boy of four and a girl of two. The family lived in two rented rooms in a small compound. She told me that she had recently moved to Calabar from her village in Akwa Ibom State and when she first arrived in the city she had attended a branch of her Akwa Ibom ministry on the other side of the city. However, the cost of the transport to church for the family was too high and she had decided to find a church in walking distance from their house. Patience had passed Greater Revival Ministry and had talked with the pastor's wife one afternoon. The family then started to attend the ministry together each Sunday, although Patience went more than the rest of the family, going twice during the week

⁴⁸That day there were about thirty people at the service, but that was just part of the total membership which was estimated by the pastor and followers as around one hundred people, making it the smallest of the four ministries I discuss in this chapter.

as well. Her husband Richard was less keen about going to church, but on went along on Sundays, saying that it was a social activity that 'provides us with some entertainment and keeps us out of trouble'. Richard had managed to find work when the family reached Calabar at the Pools betting shop at the end of the road after he had met the owner at the ministry. While other followers said that working in a gambling shop was not an ideal occupation for a convert, it was recognised that the priority was supporting his family and after a while little notice was paid to his situation. However, when Patience went looking for a job her gender and rural background proved more problematic. She told me that she knew how to type well and that she really wanted to work as a typist. However after going round government offices and the university, many of which were closed due to strikes, she found no vacancies. In the meantime she said that she was willing to do other work such as working as a waitress or cook in a small restaurant.

One day, as I was talking to Afiong, she mentioned that the building over the road from her house was going to be decorated and she was going to run a small bar there. The bar was opened early in 1994 and Afiong soon got tired with working there all the time. Her family was complaining that she was not taking advantage of her opportunity to run a business. She got up late and did not open several times at lunchtimes when she could have made some money. Afiong decided that she would employ someone to work in the bar instead and when I told this story to Patience she was keen to go and see if there was any work. So one morning I went to accompany her to meet Afiong. Patience had dressed up in her smartest clothing, which was a wrapper, to walk round to the bar, but when we arrived it was clear that Afiong was not interested in giving Patience the job. When I spoke to Afiong later she told me that Patience was not fashionable enough to work in the bar. She pointed to her clothes and said that as soon as she had seen her she had known that she was from the country and was neither 'sophisticated' nor sufficiently modern in her dress and demeanour.

The fact that Afiong considered Patience's best dress to be unsuitable clothing for staff in her bar indicated the importance of dress as a marker of social change and modernity. In Calabar within the Pentecostal ministries the proper 'comportment' of men and women informed the definition of the boundaries of the group for both men and women and structured social interaction between church members. 'Comportment' referred to the way the body surface was adorned with clothing, make-up, jewellery, headwear and shoes and was gendered, as well as informed by membership within a social group and economic position (Barnes and Eicher 1992:2). However, while all ministries agreed that dress codes were important, there was no one shared dress code. Dress was a marker of difference between Pentecostal ministries and disputes over dress codes were cited as a reason for splinter groups forming new fellowships. The early Pentecostalist ministries in Calabar had belonged to the Holiness movement, which considered all ornate clothing to be 'sinful' and 'worldly'. The Deeper Life Ministry and the Liberty Gospel Ministry were two newer ministries that continued to subscribe to many aspects of the Holiness doctrine. Mrs Ukpabio, the leader of Liberty Gospel Ministry, dressed for church most weeks in the very simple outfit worn by women throughout Calabar, of a wrapper, blouse and headtie. For more formal services, for example at weddings, or at revival meetings, Mrs Ukpabio wore dresses tailored in the western style, often with 'covered shoes' and a large brimmed hat. The women attending the church usually dressed in a way that was very similar to Mrs Ukpabio, always neatly in skirt and blouse or a dress and with a headcovering. The skirt could be a tailored western one, or a wrapper, but a skirt and headtie⁴⁹ had to be worn both inside and outside church, because as Mrs Ukpabio said, wearing a skirt or dress 'was traditional' for African women⁵⁰. As at the Deeper Life Ministry, women followers at Liberty Gospel Ministry were also not allowed to wear make up in the church. Mrs

⁴⁹The headtie could be a covering of cloth or headscarf tied at the back of the head or cloth wrapped around the head.

⁵⁰The importance of clothing as a marker of difference was indicated by the fact that a whole group of churches had become known by their clothing codes as 'white garment' or 'white robe' churches.

Ukpabio contrasted her ministry with the other Pentecostal ministries that were not Holiness churches and did not have such restrictions on women's dress. At Revival Valley ministry she said, women were allowed to wear trousers, which she considered to be an 'imported fashion' that had been adopted by people who had seen pictures of Pentecostal women in the United States wearing trousers. Mrs Ukpabio argued that 'while they can do this in America, it is not possible here, it is not our tradition',⁵¹ adding that similarly the wearing of a head covering accorded with indigenous prescriptions on female dress codes.

Pentecostal doctrine argues that husbands should exercise authority over wives in the household (Gill 1990:708, Cucchiari 1990), yet some 'traditional' gender relations are often transformed by conversion (Brusco 1986, 1997, Cucchiari 1990, Eisland 1997, Gill 1990). Men, as well as women, are subject to constraints on their comportment (Brusco 1986, Gill 1990). Brusco (1986) and Gill (1990:708) have argued that the restrictions placed on women's clothing and social activity in Pentecostal ministries in Columbia have accompanied women's demands for the reform of *machismo* and men were encouraged redirect income back into the family home instead of it spending in bars and night-clubs. In Calabar women converts said that they persuaded their husbands to convert to Pentecostalism. Men and women followers emphasised that the Liberty Gospel Ministry had changed the way they lived, for example Etim was a male follower in his forties who was born in Essien Ndim in Akwa Ibom State. He worked as a cleric in local government administration and was married with three young children. After being a member of the Presbyterian Church since a child, he converted and became born-again. He then attended Liberty Gospel Ministry three times a week. He told me that he had joined Liberty Gospel Ministry because 'the emphasis there was on practical Christian daily living'. He said that the internal transformation of

⁵¹I did not wear a headtie when I went to services and this was accepted because there was a general idea that women in the West did not wear headties. This opinion was based upon pictures in magazines and booklets from the United States.

becoming born-again was manifested in the changes in his external appearance. He was always smartly dressed, as 'a successful businessman'. This change in dress reflected the internal change, because the church 'groomed my Spirit'. Before his conversion he had frequented drinking places, and spent money unwisely. Now he had money for his family. He said that he thought that more Pentecostal churches were needed in Calabar, because 'the Pentecostal churches we have in Calabar are not even enough. We need more. As long as there are still unsaved souls, I wish every beer parlour and cinema house be converted into a church'. He said that the changes in his life made him more confident he would succeed, for 'the church has helped me to grow spiritually and chase all fears and doubt out of my life. Now I know if Jesus comes even now my salvation is sure because I live a holy life'.

However, followers stressed that other Pentecostal ministries were not all 'genuine' like Liberty Gospel Ministry. Mr Ukpabio, the husband of the founder of the church, was a lecturer in chemistry at the University of Calabar. Due to the strike at the university during 1994, he had been working in the ministry and preached with his wife. He considered that some Pentecostal churches are 'not serious' but instead 'are carefree, minding only the inside and forgetting the outside...while others are just like a social club in which people dress up and enjoy the singing, dancing and socialising'. Mr Ukpabio's remarks were prompted by the new ministries, which started to oppose the restrictions on dress within Holiness ministries. One ministry, called the Banner of Grace, had been started by women who left the Deeper Life Ministry because they wanted to be allowed to wear make-up and jewellery to church⁵². Mr Ukpabio warned against the many ministries which are run 'only by miracle preachers', or those pastors who 'preach endtime events only', or 'preach only prosperity'. Other churches do not organise 'proper church government'. It

⁵²The women who left Deeper Life Ministry to form the Banner of Grace Ministry argued that they needed to be able to dress well at church because they wanted to marry Pentecostal husbands who were members of the same ministry.

was only through good organisation and sincere motivation that a church could flourish. It was the good dynamic between the leader and followers that brought about the fellowship that could lead to 'the experiencing of the signs and miracles...for these show the presence of God'. The 'holiness' gospel teachings on gender relations were cited by many followers as the main reason why they attended Liberty Gospel Ministry. In contrast to Pentecostal ministries in other parts of the world (Cucchiari 1990, Gill 1990) women participated in all levels of organisation in ministries in Calabar, and were also ministers.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have examined the social identities of members of four Pentecostal ministries in Calabar. I have explored the ways in which living in a commercial and urban economy raised questions about the definition and relevance of ethnic and gender relations that were addressed by people in the Pentecostal ministries. The social relationships between the migrant and the indigene often influenced the interactions among Pentecostals. Calabar was perceived as a 'traditional' place by both migrants and indigenous members of the Pentecostal ministries and migrants often saw the process of becoming born-again as a common part of their journey from their home village to settle in the city. In this way, social distinctions based upon ethnicity or economic status pervaded the membership of the Pentecostal ministries. The social distinctions that were salient in people's daily life outside the fellowship entered the social relations within the ministry. However, while ethnicity informed people's affiliation to particular ministries and had an impact upon the social relations among members within ministries, the process of becoming born-again did foster a social arena not primarily based upon a sense of shared ethnicity. Pentecostals agreed that ethnicity, gender, social status and age were less important than whether a person had been born-again. Indeed, within the

Pentecostal ministries the social hierarchies informed by age, gender and ethnicity that decided the membership of the local indigenous political elite were often subverted.

The Pentecostal ministries occupied a bounded territory within which an autonomous 'saved' space was delineated⁵³. Most ministries invested the first funds they generated in buying or renting land or property. On the land the ministry would convert existing buildings into churches or construct new buildings. Within these boundaries people said they felt protected from spiritual attack. People would go and sit in the ministry compound or building when they felt vulnerable or were feeling ill. At times groups of people would meet up there, it was a place to socialise outside the house or workplace that was private and quiet, and considered a safe and respectable place to be seen in. However, although buildings were important, it was ultimately the fellowship that defined the church. The physical state of the buildings implied that these structures did not define the ministries. Often buildings were quite plainly decorated, many were decrepit. People would often say that a fellowship could be held anywhere, because it was the collectivity of people that made the ministry, not the building. In addition to the physical boundary that distinguished the territory of the ministry from the rest of the city, there was also the boundary between the 'saved' people belonging to the fellowship, and the 'unsaved' people beyond its confines. Within this 'saved' social arena in which ambitions for participation in education and leadership could be realised by people who were excluded from the offices of traditional and state government. A young Ibibio woman could be considered as a 'powerful' preacher, while participation in Calabar traditional government was reserved for older 'indigenous' men and some 'honorary' women who belonged to an Efik royal lineage.

⁵³ Other writers on the Pentecostalist movement in Africa and South America have also noted the importance of the social space provided by the ministry (Van Dijk 1992, Marshall 1991, 1993, 1995; Martin 1996, Gifford 1995b).

Plate 5.

'I pray for accidents'



Chapter Six ‘It’s not just going to heaven’: ‘Deliverance’ and prosperity within the families of Pentecostalists

Introduction

One of the sounds that I remember most vividly from fieldwork is the noise that was made by the vultures as they walked across the roof of the buildings. The birds were heavy and large and each step was distinguishable as they moved over the corrugated tin sheeting, their claws scraping against the roof. Often the birds perched on the kitchen roof, peering into the yard next door where meat was chopped up for sale at the market. The people working at the guesthouse would pelt the birds with stones, sending them flapping off slowly. Vultures were disliked in Calabar for the same reasons they are disliked elsewhere: they looked ugly and were associated with death and decay. One morning a vulture, apparently unconcerned by the presence of people in the compound, walked around the compound and headed towards the office, as if it were about to enter the room. Micah, the manager, chased the bird back out into the garden, with the rest of the staff watching. It was a comical moment, which everyone found amusing, but in the conversation that followed, the staff told me that witches often took the form of birds, particularly vultures. The relaxed gait of the bird suggested that it was clearly at home in a human environment, it was not behaving like a ‘real bird’ should.

What interested me most about the incident was the way that discussions about witchcraft were not only tinged with fear and a sense of threat, but also provoked excitement, speculation and the admiration of the workings and motives of the powerful witch. Pentecostalists entered into such debates with enthusiasm and certainly the concern with ‘protection’ from ‘spiritual attack’ was the main reason that most people in Calabar would give me for frequently attending their Pentecostal ministry. There was an ambivalent enjoyment of describing the workings of witchcraft and a curiosity about the

spiritual powers of *ndem* possession and witchcraft that came through whenever I asked anyone about it in private. The response to witchcraft in Calabar seemed similar to that described by Geschiere in Cameroon where witchcraft 'was not just something evil, but also meant thrill, excitement and the possibility of access to unknown powers' (1997:1).

This chapter is about the importance given to witchcraft and spirit possession by many Pentecostals in Calabar, and in particular, how people sought protection and deliverance from such 'spiritual attacks' by going to church. I focus upon how Pentecostals addressed spiritual attacks within the quotidian social relations of the extended family and the workplace¹, examining in greater depth the social and economic position and extended family networks of several Pentecostals at IBM, Overcomers Bible Mission, Liberty Gospel Ministry and Greater Revival Ministry. I show how people's perceptions of spiritual attack were influenced by aspects of their social identity, in particular their age group, gender and ethnicity. I am concerned with the way debates among Pentecostals about the sources of and solutions to spiritual attack fitted within a discourse about tradition and modernity. Among Pentecostals spiritual attack by *ndem* and *ifot* (witchcraft) were considered to be pervasive forces in the city, and witchcraft in particular was said to be increasingly prevalent. Witchcraft accusations have been explained sociologically as a means to re-impose social cohesion within traditional societies (Evans-Pritchard 1967; Douglas 1970). Many writers on witchcraft in rural Africa predicted that modern urban life and education would bring about the abandonment of witchcraft beliefs as the social systems they regulated were transformed (1970)². However, witchcraft is a pervasive force in modern urban centres in post-colonial Africa (Comaroff and Comaroff 1993, Bastian 1993, Fisiy and Geschiere 1996, Geschiere 1997,

¹Pentecostals often told me that they aimed to 'progress' which meant gaining material wealth, or finding a job, or make new social ties, getting more educational qualifications.

²As I discuss in chapter four, Scottish missionaries considered that education would remove the need to preach against witchcraft attack and so did not oppose witches, but rather the belief in witchcraft.

Meyer 1998), as is possession by ancestral spirits (Meyer 1998). The discussions of witchcraft by Pentecostals in Calabar shares several similarities, and differences, with the Meyer's recent account of Ghanaian Pentecostals (1998), a point that I return to during this chapter.

The Comaroffs have described witches as 'modernity's malcontents' (1993:xxix), arguing their activities articulate responses to the incursion of global capitalism into local social relations. This perspective questions the distinction drawn by anthropologists between the 'traditional' beliefs in witchcraft and the 'modern' knowledge that was imparted by Christianity and secular western education. Participation in the 'modern' economy of urban trade and further education by many people in the Pentecostal ministries did not diminish the sense of threat of spiritual attack by *ndem* possession or witchcraft that was considered to emanate from the 'demonic forces' described in the indigenous cosmology in Calabar. According to Inyang, a young follower at Liberty Gospel Ministry from Oron whom I discuss further below; Calabar was a territory that was 'ruled' by three spiritual forces, *ndem*, *ekpe* and witchcraft. He explained, in English, that, '*Ndem* is a religious sect that worships a god found in water. *Ndem* and *ekpe* are forms of authority that enforce laws. Witchcraft, which does not form a recognised society, is more of a spiritual matter. However, the common element among them is demonic control. *Ekpe* uses the influence of demons, the *ndem* cult worships demons called *ndem*, and witchcraft exercises the wicked authority of all these demons'.

For Pentecostals in Calabar there was nothing 'traditional' nor 'modern' about the reality of witchcraft. Many Pentecostals described their belief in witchcraft and *ndem* to me as a different form of knowledge about the world, but with an awareness that many westerners considered such beliefs to be superstitious, or 'empty tradition'. Rather, it was the sources of spiritual attacks and the means used to provide what Pentecostals called 'deliverance' from the 'demonic' that were categorised as 'traditional' or

'modern'. The process of becoming born again entailed the transformation of social identity through the continual re-definition of people's identities in relation to these terms.

***Ndem* spirit possession: Ukorebi Ukorebi Ita, an indigenous perspective**

When Inyang, a follower at Greater Revival Ministry, summarised the sources of 'spiritual attacks' in Calabar for me. He first mentioned the *ndem* and *ekpe*, the latter being known as the 'messenger of *ndem*'. The *ndem* are nature spirits that are considered to inhabit the rivers, springs, trees and stones in Calabar and 'protected' the territory 'owned' by the Efik, Qua and Efut indigenes in Calabar. Whenever people settled in Calabar they could be influenced by these indigenous deities³, but the indigenes in Calabar were considered to have a special relationship with the *ndem*, as they were 'children' of *ndem*. This spiritual ancestry entitled them to join *ekpe* and *ndem* societies⁴ and protected the land and property that provided the main form of income through rent. Indigenes, Pentecostals often said, were the last people to be born again because their interests were too well served by involvement with indigenous spirits. Both migrants and indigenes in the Pentecostal ministries considered that the 'worship of traditional spirits' in Calabar should stop. However, within the fellowship differences of gender and age also influenced people's perspectives towards indigenous cosmology.

In this first section I examine how the indigenous cosmology and the spiritual attacks emanating from *ndem*, were perceived by indigenes and migrants. Ukorebi Ukorebi Ita was a young Efik man in his twenties who

³Witchcraft has been associated with the impersonal power of political elites in post-colonial West Africa (Austen 1993, Geschiere 1997).

⁴Water deities existed in cosmologies through neighbouring Akwa Ibom and Igbo states, but in Calabar migrants and indigenes stated that the organisations or 'cults' that surrounded these deities were more prevalent and had more authority.

was a member of Overcomers Bible Mission. I first met Ukorebi Ukorebi Ita at the party held for his father's seventieth birthday, Ukorebi Ukorebi Asuquo. His father was an *etubom* in the *Obong's* Council from Ikot Offiong in western Calabar. I had met him at many 'traditional' Efik events. He was on the organisation committee for the 1994 Calabar Festival. The family lived in a large detached house in State Housing, and were recognised to be one of the indigenous elite. *Etubom* was considered by many to be a likely choice for the future *Obong*. The *etubom* was a Presbyterian and had been educated by Scottish missionaries at Hope Waddell School in the 1930s and had taught there himself in the 1950s-1960s. In 1994 was the Dean of the Faculty of Engineering at the Calabar Polytechnic.

About thirty people crammed into the large front room at the *etubom's* house. The lounge was decorated like many relatively affluent middle-class homes in Calabar. The lounge-dining room was separated by a wooden divider on which were a large television and video, surrounded by books and family photographs and a vase of plastic flowers. On the walls were several of the beaded cloth bags that are made by Efik craftsmen and a church calendar of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria. The *etubom* sat in front of the shelves wearing the wrapper of *ukara* cloth reserved for initiates of the *ekpe* society, with the *bidak* hat that was worn solely by the Calabar *etuboms*. Family members, and people from the Calabar Polytechnic and the Presbyterian Church sat around the edges of the room on large, low upholstered sofas. It was quite an informal occasion, punctuated with speeches, prayers and a libation.

The *etubom* first thanked the guests for coming, then said the prayer of libation and, at the end, instead of pouring the liquid into the soil, he raised his glass up above his head, to *abasi enyong*, not *abasi isong*. He explained that he was active in promoting all those aspects of indigenous worship that could be modified in accordance with Christian practices. In his words,

libation would become 'a simple prayer and not a sacrifice'. But before the birthday cake was cut his son said that he also wanted to add a Christian prayer. He disputed that the libation could be made into a Christian prayer, for wherever the liquid was poured, the prayers had been addressed to spirits which were demonic and Presbyterians were 'mixing up' Christianity and spirits by doing that. He followed this speech with prayers and extolled the qualities of his father, who listened with a contented expression, clearly aware of his son's eloquence, but also bemused by the fervour of the born-again prayer.

Immediately afterwards the conversation turned to Ukorebi Ukorebi Ita's view of Efik cosmology and whether he would carry on his father's involvement in the business of the house (*ufok*) and local government. There was clearly a generational difference between the attitude of indigenes towards *ndem*. Ukorebi Ukorebi Ita was a student at the University of Calabar studying theatre arts, and was preparing a project on Efik plays and I often met him studying at the library at the museum. He clearly was part of an economic elite in Calabar. He had few financial worries and worked full time on his academic projects while living at the university campus or in the family house. He told me that the Ukorebi family contained long-standing members of the Presbyterian Church (PCN). His father was an elder in the church and Ukorebi Ukorebi Ita had been baptised into the PCN. However, in his twenties, when he went to university, he decided to become born-again, since many of the friends he had met at university were born again and invited him to church. After his conversion many of his new friends had called into question aspects of his upbringing. As the son of a royal lineage, he was eligible to be selected as an *etubom* and entitled to be a candidate for the post of *Obong*, the paramount ruler of the Efiks. Church members said that if he were to pursue these offices he would never escape from the demonic covenants that bound all people who prayed and sacrificed to indigenous spirits.

However, Ukorebi Ukorebi Ita said that he was reluctant to relinquish all involvement in social events where libation was poured, such as the birthday party, because he did not want to be cut him off from his family and older friends with whom he lived and whose company he enjoyed. Unlike his father he was not prepared to look for ways to integrate Christian and 'traditional' practices. He said that he valued being a 'freeborn Efik' from a 'royal family' and 'every royal son, he said, was a son of *ndem*', but represented this as a stage in the history of religious ideas and an aspect of culture. The religious significance of *ndem* was, he argued, part of Calabar's history, not the present. The Efiks, he argued, already believed in a supreme being, *Abasi Ibom*, when the Presbyterian mission reached Calabar. The missionaries then used the Efik word *abasi* to translate 'God' in Bible translations. Conversion simply clarified an obscure and undeveloped belief about the Supreme Being, a belief that was 'like the altar to the Unknown God that Paul found that the Athenians had built'. Before the mission designation of *abasi* as a caring approachable god, the *ndem*, were believed to be mediators between God and man, the *musang abasi*, the 'angels' and 'messengers' to *abasi ibom*. He argued that the 'cultic seriousness' that remained in Calabar could be 'shed' in conversion, 'to leave culture...the aesthetics of Efik culture' which could be enjoyed as a 'cultural display'. There was 'nothing bad about the *ekpe* cult', of which he was an initiate, for 'it was for cultural display only, like a Caribbean carnival'. Indeed, like Pastor Archibong at IBM, Ukorebi Ukorebi Ita argued that Pentecostals needed to have a knowledge of local traditional culture in order to recruit more indigenes to the Pentecostal movement, for, in his words, 'to be a good fisherman you must know about the sea'.

He went on to say that Pentecostal practices 'did not devalue African spirituality', and unlike European Christianity, Pentecostals in Calabar 'can use old traditions with a present day significance', such as the practice of the blood covenant replaced by the idea of the spiritual covenant. He considered that the ministry he attended was particularly useful for younger

people, because it 'helped the youths of the country' to come together and 'have a meeting place with a Christian focus' rather than meeting only in secular places. However, he felt strongly that the indigenous youth should try to perpetuate what remained of Efik culture and warned that some people in the Pentecostal movement 'advocated the wholesale destruction of Efik culture'. The new Pentecostal ministries that were 'largely run by outsiders' who were 'taking those young people who are the guardians of the next generation...because older indigenes are unlikely to move to the Pentecostal church'. He added that...'it is very hard to convert an Efik man to a Pentecostal church...there are already many things that the Efik did that no longer exist'. He did not think that Efik customs were a frightening phenomenon, but thought on the contrary that they were declining. The Pentecostal 'attack' upon Efik culture had been so widespread in Calabar that he thought that the Efik elders should be congratulated for organising the 1994 Calabar Festival, and 'no Pentecostals were involved in that' as they 'did not show any concern with conserving Efik cultural traditions'.

Compared with many other Pentecostals, Ukorebi Ukorebi Ita's opinions were unusual. Most members of his ministry were migrants who thought any participation in family ceremonies where local practices occurred was wrong. However, he explained migrant's opposition to Efik practices in cultural terms. Migrants resented the cultural hegemony the Efiks had asserted throughout the south eastern region since the slave-trading era. Genealogical ties between Efik royal families and neighbouring Ibibio and Igbo peoples were ignored and a separate cultural identity emphasised for the Efik. Ita thought that the Efiks and other indigenes needed to 'modernise' their attitude towards all the other inhabitants of Calabar who were not members of the royal families. In particular to remove the social stigma still attached to those Ibibio and Igbo families that were designated by the Efiks as 'sons of slaves' because they could not trace genealogical ties to one of the seven Efik clans (*itiaba esien Efik*).

Ukorebi Ita added that over a century after the end of the slave trade people in Calabar from the different ethnic groups were more integrated. But he said he was aware that there were still those Efik people who 'called other people names' and traded insults based upon social identities forged in slavery, reviving old 'gossips of ancestry' in order to claim that other people were slaves and not royal Efiks. These gossips were a pervasive part of everyday conversation and caused people to be reticent about their family tree, or to emphasise the Efik side and overlook the Ibibio side, while 'real' indigenes made disparaging remarks⁵. In contrast, Ukorebi Ita noted that such 'gossips of ancestry' were completely absent from the Pentecostal ministries. There people did not discriminate against 'sons of slaves'. Instead they were part of 'God's family', and past history was less important than being born-again in the present moment. The Pentecostal ministries accepted all followers without any discrimination based upon either genealogy or ethnicity.

Ukorebi Ita said that he recognised his perspective upon Efik indigenous cosmology was unusual among Pentecostals, and he added that he was one of the few young people in his ministry to disagree with the commonly held view that 'tradition' was entirely wrong. He concluded that the vast majority of Pentecostals, even those who were Efiks, were of the younger generations and 'didn't see anything good in *ndem*'⁶. In fact, Ukorebi Ita argued that migration of non-Efik people to Calabar had eroded indigenous institutions like *ndem*, as they had little incentive to 'foster and conserve' the Efik culture that designated them 'sons of slaves'. Most migrants sought what Meyer has termed 'a complete break with the past' in born-again conversion (1998:318). In many ways, this debate suggested that for indigenes, Efiks,

⁵ I heard one Efik woman tell an Ibibio person, in English, that she did not understand them when they spoke in Ibibio. She asked them to speak in English. In fact Efik and Ibibio are mutually understandable languages with a few minor differences in vocabulary and syntax.

⁶ Ukorebi Ita added that the *ndem* priestess was still required on ceremonial occasions, such as the coronation of an *Obong*, and at that point a woman was selected from the Eyo Ema lineage in Cobham Town. There was not a permanent person in the office of *ndem* priestess. Other women operated shrines privately. They tended to be very old and there were no younger people doing that.

Qua and Efut, personal and cultural history was perceived as an unbroken lineage, traced through known ancestors. Even Pentecostalistes who were indigenes, like Ukorebi Ukorebi Ita, saw the transition from 'traditional' inheritance to born-again conversion as the gradual process of tradition 'dying out'. Whereas for many migrants cultural history was fractured by the breaks in personal history brought about by the journeys of migration, both migration to the city since the 1970s and migrations across the Calabar hinterland during the slave trade.

***Ndem* spirit possession: Inyang and Eno, the migrants' perspective**

Efik indigenes such as Ukorebi Ukorebi Ita and many others in the Presbyterian Church often called *ndem* the *musang abasi*, the 'messengers of God'. However, most Pentecostalistes stated instead that *ndem* were not 'messengers of god' but 'fallen angels', the 'demons' that appear in the English translations of the Bible. While Efik dictionaries often translate 'demon' as *ndem*⁷. In the next two sections I examine how men and women migrants and women indigenes often considered that being born again marked the start of a gradual process of breaking away from the 'traditional spirits' associated with their home territory. Many Pentecostalistes who had migrated to Calabar became born- again for the first time when they settled in Calabar. While the few indigenous Pentecostalistes negotiated a gradual separation from their families, the experience of migration prompted a much more decisive severance from the religion of their original village that paralleled the physical separation from extended family in the home village. The experience of migration to the city involved realignment of social relations with the extended family, and the new network of social relations with the indigenous people and other migrants in the city. For example, Inyang and Eno moved to Calabar in the early 1980s. Inyang was in his late twenties and came from a small village near Oron in Akwa Ibom State. He had migrated to Calabar to drive an *alalok* motorcycle taxi alongside a

⁷*The English-Efik Dictionary* by R.F.G. Adams, *et al* Oron: Manson Publishers, 1980.

friend. They rented two rooms in a compound that belonged to the Efik taxi owner. Several months later his wife Eno moved to join him in Calabar and his wife rented a plot where she set up a small roadside stall and sold household goods such as soaps, washing powder and foodstuffs like rice and *garri*⁸. I first met her at Greater Revival Ministry and we became friends.

The early days of his business in Calabar had been filled with financial problems, petrol prices increased and he had several accidents on the bike which meant he had to go months without working. He feared that the accidents were attacks that emanated from his home village, but he had not known what to do about them. Occasionally they went to the Methodist Church, because Inyang and his family had all been members of the Methodist church since being baptised as children and he had gone to the Methodist school in Oron and worked at the Methodist hospital there as a mechanic. There had been no Pentecostal ministries in his village and at that time he had not been interested in travelling to the nearest churches in Oron. However on reaching Calabar they started to go to services at several Pentecostal ministries before joining the Greater Revival Ministry not long after it opened in November 1993. He met other migrants there, mainly Igbo people, but 'was not interested in their customs'. He said that he had started going to the Pentecostal ministries when he reached Calabar because he thought that the ministries were 'more powerful' than the Methodist church in 'dealing' with spiritual attack. At home he had not felt so vulnerable to spiritual attack as he had done since he moved to Calabar. In Oron region there were similar beliefs in 'marine spirits'. However, in Calabar *ndem* were considered to be 'more powerful' than in Oron, due, he said, to the convergence of rivers at the port, which in turn meant that he and his family were 'more susceptible' to their influences. The presence of *ndem* facilitated the practice of witchcraft, which was, he thought, more powerful in Calabar. Inyang argued said that becoming born-again was now far more important to him since he had settled in Calabar than his social ties with his family in

⁸*Garri* was the staple food in Calabar, made from manioc roots.

Inyang and Eno said they had become born-again when they moved from Akwa Ibom and settled in Calabar. They said that they 'had not known much about *ndem* custom' in their village. When they lived there they went to the Methodist church and never went to consult the *ndem* priestess. However, since they arrived in Calabar they had learnt more *ndem* from neighbours and people they had met at the ministry. Eno was troubled by *ndem* covenants soon after they first settled in Calabar. Her food trading had initially made a good income in Calabar, then after a few years her business faced a series of setbacks. She lost a lot of stock in a fire in the market and an employee had absconded with a week's takings. Then she discovered that her elder son was sick and she brought him to the church on several occasions. Eventually, after several prayers were said, the son did not improve and he was admitted to the university teaching hospital. The woman continued going to Greater Revival to pray for the recovery of her son. Then on one occasion, as the fellowship prayed together, someone said that they felt that the woman was not a church member, that she was a stranger, an outsider, and 'not really part of the congregation'. The preacher had a revelation that the family's problems were caused by an ancestral covenant, and said that there had to be a 'denouncement' before the situation could improve. The pastor and two other preachers spoke to Eno afterwards and told her to go back to her village, to find out what was causing the problems. Inyang and Eno received this news with caution. When they travelled back to the village, they felt obliged to take gifts. Although they went back to the village quite often, they felt that they had become marginal figures there. They were not excluded from meetings, and were encouraged to return to the village on visits, but they were aware that they were 'sidelined' in decisions and said that they felt an underlying resentment. Their children liked it even less. They had been born in Calabar and had never lived in the village.

It was the end of September when Eno and Inyang travelled back and stayed with Inyang's maternal aunt in Oron. From there they travelled by car to the village that Eno came from. She went to consult the *ndem* priestess and was told that her late mother had been married according to local custom but without the full bridewealth being paid. A libation had been poured at the wedding that joined the participants in covenant with *ndem*, which they had not fulfilled, as the bridewealth had still not been paid. Eno explained to me that 'marine spirits' were believed to safeguard property, produced wealth and fertility, and guarded children from harm. In the village people would dedicate a child who survived a serious illness or some other hazard, to the particular *ndem* associated with those concerns. Some children were given names that were associated with the *ndem*, such as his own name, 'Inyang' which meant river, and had been given to him after prayers were made to *ndem* on his behalf. The case was resolved by the payment of the bridewealth. It turned out to be an expensive trip. The bus fares, the presents, the consultation with the *ndem* priestess and the settling of the outstanding bridewealth were all paid for by Eno as her parents were deceased. This case, like that of many other migrants, shows how *ndem* possession highlighted a sense of distance from, and lack of knowledge of, the extended families in the home village. Conversion had taught her things about the past that she did not know, but which still impinged upon and frustrated progress. 'Something was stopping them from going forward and progressing' and 'holding them back from success'. Conversion, therefore, made *ndem* and ancestral spirits loom more real and relevant in migrants' daily lives in the city, while also providing the means of deliverance of such spirits. The pastor had told her that this was a consequence of the 'evil idols and demi-gods that ancestors had entangled themselves with, they worshipped these demi-gods or those deities until their death'. The consequences were perilous, for 'you cannot traffic with demons and go free like that. When they die they leave their names for a curse. Anybody that comes to bear that name is bound by ancestral spirits, you don't know that your father or grandfather did a covenant on your behalf and that your

family serves the demi-god'. He added that most people in Calabar were unaware that they were bound by such covenants. He described the Methodist or Qua Ibo Church as, 'those orthodox churches that don't even tell you the truth, who don't reach you enough for you to understand that such things were made for you to break loose from'. At such churches, people 'just go to church'. They do not find out about *ndem* possession. He added, 'normally they discover things start working adversely and some say it's the power of witches. But most problems we are having in Calabar is because of the kinds of states, the kind of lives our grandparents lived. Almost every family, there was this introduction of mermaid spirits for worship or demi-gods or deities, things like that'.

For the migrant, threat of *ndem* in the home village was compounded by the threat of *ndem* possession in Calabar. Inyang's own troubles were with the agents of indigenous cosmology of Calabar in a bureaucratic guise. Inyang had started making more money from the *alalok* motorcycle taxi. He rented the bike from the owner and drove long hours, charging between two and four naira fare per 'drop'. From this he had to buy fuel which was increasing in price. To provide more financial security he joined the Professional Riders Club (PRC), a society for cyclists, most of whom were *alalok* riders. The society provided credit union and assistance with meeting family expenses, such as the costs of burials. Membership also provided assistance with hospital fees when there were accidents. The income of the PRC came from members' fees and the earnings of the acrobatic motorcycle display team that performed at burials and was hired by politicians for local elections and advertising campaigns by commercial companies. The motorcycle trade was divided along ethnic lines, the majority of the *alaloks* were migrants from Akwa Ibom State⁹ while Igbos were more likely to own the spare parts shops, repair shops and sell new, used and 'Belgian'¹⁰ bikes.

⁹A point confirmed by Obong Charles who was the leader of Akwa Ibom State indigenes settled in Calabar.

¹⁰Second hand parts were categorised by quality, with 'belgian' parts, those imported second hand from Europe, being considered to be of higher quality than new and second-hand 'japan' parts which usually came from Korea.

Efiks were more likely to own the plots of land where shops were built, and often the bikes as well, which were rented out to riders.

The PRC had also campaigned against the increases in road tax charged by the city government to the *alalok* drivers. Inyang had a personal experience of the ways in which local government extracted fees from migrants by invoking 'traditional authority'. He recounted that when he arrived in Calabar and started to drive his motorcycle taxi around he realised that he had to pay a road tax to the Cross River State government. These taxes were collected intermittently at roadblocks that were set up by government officials on major routes in the city centre. Wooden planks with upturned nails would be thrown down in the road and every cyclist with a passenger would be stopped and told that they had to pay 50 naira in tax. If they did not pay they would be 'arrested' and taken to the State office on Marian Road, and such arrests were quite common. One day, as I passed through a roadblock where city officials were fining drivers, I was stopped myself by the officer who said that he was going to fine me. After he agreed not to fine me, I asked him more about the tax that they were levying. The tax was fifty naira¹¹, and he showed me the tax sticker decorated with an illustration of an *ekpe idem* masquerader on. 'This is the culture we [the indigenes] really respect', he told me, 'more than police, and everyone (*alalok*) who passes here has to pay this fine'.

That the *ekpe* society 'ruled' (*kara*) in Calabar was also emphasised in an equally visible way. Inyang pointed out that the choice of the *ekpe* masquerader to illustrate the tax sticker was highly appropriate, for it echoed the way masqueraders of the *ekpe* society also stopped drivers on the road. The *ekpe* masquerade came out during Christmas and New Year, for festivals and for the funerals, weddings and chieftaincy titles of initiates. Whenever the *ekpe* masquerade paraded around the streets, all passers-by, cars and motorcycles could be stopped and people were not allowed to pass.

¹¹One pound was worth about sixty naira.

At funerals masqueraders would run carrying a whip with which they would beat people in the traffic queues, and those on bikes were especially subject to a 'beating'. A 'beating' usually meaning that they were hit roughly, but not dangerously, with whips or sticks. The young men and boys accompanying the masquerader would then demand money and would only let them pass by when they had handed money over. For Inyang what he termed the 'ownership of the road' by the *ekpe* society was part of the control exerted by indigenes, and which rested upon indigenous spirits. The *ekpe* society he said, was 'a confraternity of believers in the deity of *ekpe* or leopard and their avowed belief that *ekpe* is God. 'Ekpe society springs from the *ndem* cult and the spirit of ancestors. *Ekpe* was the society of the indigenes in Calabar'.

Only Efiks from the royal families could take the high-ranking posts in the society and were entitled to receive a share of fees of new members and fines levied. Membership of the *ekpe* society was a prerequisite for taking up any office in the traditional authority structures. The incumbents of the offices were considered by young people to 'have an ear' to the State Government which gave them a power which they abused, as indicated at the motorcycle roadblock. Sometimes Inyang would mock the *ekpe* initiates and the older Presbyterians as the 'traditionalists' who were of a different generation to the majority of younger migrants and indigenes. As he put it, they were 'old men in the realm of dreams'. The older generations perpetuated a 'confused' and 'corrupted' combination of Christian and local, 'traditional' values¹². People like *Etubom* Ukorebi Ukorebi Asuquo who as a member of the *Obong*'s Council and an elder at the Presbyterian Church had long epitomised the elite in Calabar. In contrast to this sense of

confusion among the older generations, the Pentecostals, he thought, had 'simple' and 'straightforward' religious allegiances that provided them with an 'integrity' and 'honesty' in scriptural and financial matters. As Inyang said, 'the orthodox and white robe churches are different from the Pentecostal ministries because they have allowed tradition and worldly atrocities to take over from the real preaching. They compromise with well-to-do people who corrupt the church, whereas the Pentecostals do not allow this'.

Supernatural security: spiritual attacks among Pentecostals

Christians, you are 'hard to kill' for your life is with God. A Christian born-again can't be killed, they have supernatural security. If you are an aggressor who wants to die quick, why don't you try to attack the Christians...a child of God is hard to kill. Other people just don't know the benefit - it's not just going to heaven, many people live in fear and look for a way to secure their lives, they join occultic groups, but what are they looking for? Security? Won't they still be exposed? The best thing is to give your life to Jesus so that no one can kill you. With Jesus you get 'spiritual Aso Rock',¹³ you get settled. Look at you with your Mercedes Benz, do not fear attack by robbers...once you have given your life to Jesus the Bible declares you a dead man, dead to poison, dead to demonic attacks, dead to gunshots. You will become hard to kill. So if you are attacking a Christian living with you in the same yard, or working in the same company with you - you are preparing your own coffin.

(Pastor Abraham, Overcomers Bible Mission, advertising on the weekly Cross River State radio programme, April 1995).

¹²Those followers who were Calabar indigenes often said that there was a need to wrest political and economic control from traditional leaders. Many migrants had been sent to Calabar, often with the financial assistance of the home village, to complete their education or to find jobs. The village heads and family members would expect a return. Many migrants aimed to visit the village frequently and invest their earnings in building a house or joining traditional societies in the village. Yet other migrants had less contact, and their children often were unfamiliar with the village. Many migrants faced financial demands and perceived ill-feeling from people in their village. Bastian (1993) has noted similar relations between Igbo migrants and villagers.

¹³Aso Rock is the seat of the Federal Government.

About two-thirds of the membership in all four ministries were women. At the weekday deliverance services, and in the deliverance sections of the Sunday services, the proportion of women was even higher, at around seventy per cent. Many of the women were migrants, but middle aged indigenous women were far more likely to attend than their male contemporaries. When Efik, Ibibio and most Igbo women married, they moved to live with their husbands, so this meant that women had long been migrants in the region, travelling to Calabar if they married an Efik man, or moving with a husband who migrated to the city. Other migrant women had come to Calabar to start work or attend school or university. When I asked women why they attended church they invariably replied that they did so to get 'protection' and deliverance from spiritual attack, by which they meant both *ndem* possession and witchcraft. Migrant and indigenous men also feared spiritual attack, but were less likely to seek deliverance solely at the Pentecostal ministry, and were disposed to seek protection from the *abiaidion* (witchdoctor) or the customary court. This section of the chapter is about the way that two women followers at IBM dealt with witchcraft within their extended families and how they sought to resolve the issue in the ministry, which involved leaving IBM and going to the Descendants of Israel. The fear of witchcraft was the primary factor in their decision to go to a different church, and I always felt that this fear was as much about the dangers of being accused of witchcraft as being attacked by it.

As I have discussed above, migrant women like Eno experienced the threat from *ndem* from the home village and from Calabar *ndem*, while local women indigenes rarely expressed a fear of *ndem* possession. While feelings about *ndem* differed between migrants and locals, and among family members of different generations, everyone condemned witchcraft (*ifot*). Migrant Pentecostals often said that indigenous *ndem* 'facilitated' witchcraft in Calabar. However, everyone considered that witchcraft was motivated by the selfish greed of the wealthy individual, or by the envy of

the poor. Envy (*usua*, or *isininyin*) is thought to motivate poor witches to attack rich people, while greed (*idiokiton* or *okpum*) motivates rich people to extract wealth from the poor. There is also a protective 'good' witchcraft force, provided by the *abiaidion*. This is an individual force, not based in secret societies like *ndem*. It was a conscious force, 'the conscious ability to manipulate forces for evil use' and 'the use of magical acts to practise sorcery' and the use of evil forces for selfish ends, the 'manipulation of evil spirit to achieve one's purpose', according to informants. Witchcraft was very much about jealousies and rivalries in the present, so culprits were the victim's contemporaries, which was considered by most people to be a far more threatening prospect than the *ndem* attacks which were attributed to the misguided efforts of the victim's grandparents to secure spiritual assistance. Whereas *ndem* was often said to be 'dying out', witchcraft was said by most people, Pentecostals and others, to be 'very strong' in Calabar and rapidly increasing.

Witchcraft was most dangerous when it occurred within the extended family, and this was the most common site for attacks during fieldwork and was the case in the two accounts I look at below. Witchcraft attacks and accusations in rural Africa have been argued to be more common among close relatives and people sharing other close social ties and living in proximity (Evans-Pritchard 1976, Krige 1943). Other studies of witchcraft in rural Africa show how the social mechanisms of accusation and confession serve to indicate 'strains' and tensions in the social structure (Marwick 1964). In the 1990s Calabar witchcraft accusations did seem to be very common within the extended family, particularly between the women of a patrilineage and those women who had married into the lineage. Tensions persisted in the modern urban context, made more complex by labour migration and women's employment in the cash economy (Englund 1996). However, in Calabar witchcraft in the family was considered to exist alongside witchcraft among strangers. People feared attacks not only from within the family, but recognised that they were threatened by an unrelated

person 'living in the same yard' or 'working in the same company'. As elsewhere in southern Nigeria, the fear of spiritual attack was not solely of an aspect of 'tradition' situated in the rural village, it was also considered a threat in urban contexts and often gained new meanings and power from the urban situation (Bastian 1993:133, Fisiy and Geschiere 1996, Geschiere 1997). Witchcraft attack, in particular, was often perceived as a modern, urban hazard. In Pastor Abraham's sermon witchcraft is set alongside 'poison' and 'gunshots' and other random and anonymous threats prevalent in the urban environment (1993:131)¹⁴. Witchcraft was also located as a force that governed state administration, through the power of the indigenes, an argument that I discuss further in chapter eight. However, it was still the case that witchcraft was most commonly experienced within the extended family¹⁵. I focus upon debates about witchcraft that occurred within the extended families of two women in their late twenties who attended IBM ministry and examine the different social arenas in which they sought to resolve these concerns. I focus upon young women because they were the people who most often talked about the threat witchcraft with me and most frequently sought deliverance from witchcraft attacks by family members by going to the Pentecostal ministry, rather than the *abiaidion*. All the generations in the two families participated in the disputes over witchcraft, but family members viewed them from diverse perspectives and they did not all take their concerns to the Pentecostal ministry.

Afiong and Mary

I first met Afiong when I went to deliver presents sent to her by a relative in Britain. She lived with her children and her maternal grandmother in the

¹⁴Bastian's work on Onitsha market newspapers shows how a concern with witchcraft is central to southern Nigerian urban popular culture (1993).

¹⁵Witchcraft was considered a threat in diverse social contexts in Calabar. Migrant traders often feared attacks from particular people who were their competitors, as I discussed in chapter five.

centre of the city. As I described in chapter five, Afiong had married a Lebanese man and had two children. They lived in State Housing in a large house and made several trips abroad, including Edinburgh. As a married woman, Afiong had lived with her husband, but moved back with the maternal kin when she divorced¹⁶. When I first arrived in Calabar I spent a lot of time with her and her family. She helped me to find somewhere to live and often invited me to go out with her, sometimes to IBM¹⁷ where she often went to services. Afiong was an Efik indigene¹⁸, but expressed little interest in participating in traditional ceremonies. Through Afiong I met her friend Mary who was a few years older and who lived in a house further down the same road, with her mother, her three other sisters, and their children. Mary did not come from an Efik family, although Mary and Afiong were related as distant cousins through their maternal families, instead her mother had migrated to Calabar from Akwa Ibom several decades ago and her paternal grandfather was German. Mary was separated from the father of her six-year-old son who had moved back to live in Akwa Ibom State.

Afiong and Mary had had a secondary education and spoke fluent English which they used everyday with Igbo and other non-Efik speakers in Calabar. Mary had gone to Holy Child Catholic secondary school, and left in 1985 when she started trading in haberdashery goods, buying material, buttons, ties and scarves, in Lagos and selling them on in Calabar. She often showed me a suitcase full of ties or handkerchiefs that she would distribute to small shops in Calabar or sell direct to customers. Her earnings made her more financially secure and independent than Afiong, although she did work far

¹⁶In Efik society, married women could return to their father's household. 'An Efik woman doesn't marry long' was the English translation of an Efik saying. Ibibio and Igbo considered it a disgrace for the daughter to return back to the father's compound and she was likely to be rejected as she had formally joined the lineage of her husband.

¹⁷At the evening services that were held during the week, there were still a majority of women in the fellowship. Women members said that they had long been attending the ministry because the 'healing' and 'deliverance' aspect of the ministry was 'strong'. However, the greater emphasis placed upon preaching the prosperity gospel in IBM since it started was cited by many younger men as the reason that they had started to attend the services.

¹⁸Her father was from the royal Efik family, and her mother had been from Itu, Akwa Ibom State. Because Efik inheritance was patrilineal, she counted herself as an indigene.

harder to gain an income. She showed her wealth in conspicuous ways. She drove a car, and often wore tailored clothes made at expensive dressmakers and sent her son to the private Montessori primary school and then to the private army school, which stayed open throughout the 1994 strikes. She lived with her mother, her older sister and their children in a small house in the compound that belonged to her mother, who had inherited it when her father had died. Despite the fact that she enjoyed a better standard of living than most of her neighbours, or perhaps because of this fact, Mary often confided in me that her economic position was very insecure. Firstly she claimed that the paternal family had on several occasions tried to take their house from them, and secondly because throughout 1994 traders like Mary who bought goods from Lagos to sell on in Calabar were being badly affected by rising fuel prices and bank strikes. Mary shared the costs of running the house with her three other sisters, one worked at the Post Office, one at the bank and another traded like Mary.

Seeking deliverance at IBM

When I first met Afiong and Mary at the end of 1993 they were both going to Pentecostal services. They did not appear to be members at any one ministry, and often went with friends of their own age to different ministries, especially when they heard that there was a new preacher. They frequently went to IBM with Mary driving them in her car. Mary's sisters were keen churchgoers, with the younger one going to services six evenings a week and she even arranged a prayer session at her birthday party, saying that Mary should know about the powerful preachers in Calabar. However, in 1993 Mary and Afiong preferred to go to services at IBM, which was considered by many Pentecostals to be a ministry for the successful elite in Calabar. They often went together and they invited me to go with them on Boxing Day 1993. I describe this service in detail below, firstly, because it

provides an example of the events that were repeated in services at all the other ministries I visited in Calabar¹⁹, and secondly because it shows the differing emphases placed upon deliverance, salvation and prosperity. At IBM there were two or three of the different services held in the week, in addition to the Sunday service. The times of all the services were displayed on a signboard alongside the highway outside the church. The ministry ran services six days of the week including the two shifts for the Sunday service. On weekday evenings between around 5 p.m. and 9 p.m. there were smaller services structured around particular themes, a 'deliverance' service, a 'healing' service, a miracle service and a prayer service²⁰. The format of the Boxing Day service at IBM was similar to the large Sunday and holiday services at all the other ministries I visited. Sundays were when most people turned up and when child dedication, weddings and baptisms were held²¹.

I had visited IBM before with Mrs Bassey, a head teacher, and that day I went with her, while Afiong and Mary went in Mary's car. As we drove through the gates Mrs Bassey told me that the compound at IBM was 'impressive'. The pastor's house the gates were ajar and we could see the front patio. It would, she said, be 'like paradise' to live in a house like that²². Although Afiong added later, with some scepticism, that the pastor had come from a wealthy family anyway which had not always been so pious, demonstrating her sense of easy familiarity with other members of the Efik elite. We were late and the 10 a.m. service had already started when we

¹⁹ Although spontaneity of worship is highly valued by Pentecostals, services often contain similar elements, as other studies have noted (Toulis 1997:276).

²⁰ At deliverance and healing services women would form a larger proportion of the participants, around seventy per cent. Women who attended services said that this was due to the physical problems that surround child bearing and the care of a family.

²¹ I saw several child dedication services and baptisms, but there were very few weddings. Pentecostals said that the shortage of money and uncertainty of that time was making people postpone the expense of a wedding. The weddings I went to in 1994-5 were all in orthodox churches or traditional weddings held by wealthier families. Pentecostal funeral services were held at the compound of the deceased and at the cemetery, rarely in the church. Pentecostal ministries did not hold memorial services for dead relatives as the orthodox churches did.

²² Mrs Bassey had a small but comfortable house in the centre of Calabar, furnished with comfortable sofas and a TV. Her daughter lived in the United States and she received assistance from them in addition to her job as a head teacher. She now lives with her family in the United States.

arrived²³. However, latecomers did not disrupt the service which was being blared out through a public address system and we could hear people singing choruses to the music being played by the band. We were met at the entrance by a young woman steward who showed us to some seats at the front of the building, Afiong and Mary greeted some of their friends and relatives who lived in State Housing and went to IBM frequently²⁴.

The ministry was clearly wealthy. Reverend Engineer Archibong was doing the first Bible reading from the stage²⁵, wearing a well-cut western suit with a gold watch and gold pen protruding from his top pocket. Mrs Bassey pointed out his wife, Mrs Archibong, who was seated on the right hand side of the stage and like many of the other women in the church she was wearing a wrapper made of beautiful 'george' cloth. When the prayer was over, Reverend Archibong returned to sit next to his wife to the right of the stage while the IBM band playing the new, expensive electronic synthesisers and drums, accompanied the choir and followers singing popular Pentecostal songs²⁶. The choir comprised around twenty-five men and women who all wore a 'uniform' of black and white clothing. The wealth of the membership was also illustrated by the participation in the first of the three offerings that took place during the service. All the followers shuffled up to the front of the hall to put money in a closed box, moving around the church to greet friends on the way.

In the sermon that followed, the metaphor of the palm tree was used to describe the church as the source of much and varied wealth that would come to those whose riches were 'planted in the house of the Lord'. The pastor then recommended sections of the sheet that had been handed out by

²³Each Sunday service started off with a Bible study session, people would sit in small groups while the teacher went through a Bible passage, asking questions and prompting responses. Everyone brought a Bible to church and followed the teacher in the text, reading passages aloud.

²⁴On this occasion Mrs Bassey was meeting work colleagues at the church and the group was seated in the high status seats at the front of the church.

²⁵Joshua 1:1-11 was a popular passage in the ministries.

the stewards about how to 'search the scriptures' that gave readings followers could do at home. Then large pledges were made. Around 50,000 naira was pledged to IBM over the next year. Reverend Archibong prophesied that 1994 was going to be a 'year of difficulty' in which people would face many struggles. Reverend Archibong asked people to raise their money in the air to be blessed before they placed it in the box, praying that the money that they had in their bank accounts would be 'replenished tenfold'. Mrs Bassey made a pledge, but the younger women did not, giving only to the offering plate. Afiong said that she would give IBM money 'if she had any' and Mary said that she was thinking about it, although neither gave money at that time because they said that they could not afford it. Pastor Archibong started to pray that 'the spirit should descend again upon the fellowship'. He stopped speaking in English and started speaking in tongues. The voice of the pastor 'praying for the Spirit to descend' with the followers responding 'Amen', or 'Praise the Lord'. The pastor's voice was amplified and boomed across the hall as he also spoke in tongues, he then asked, in English, everyone to pray, because prayer made the fellowship 'stronger' and the 'Spirit would descend'.

The service also was punctuated by prayers for deliverance from spiritual attack. After the first offering, there had been a call from the pastor for all 'newcomers' to go to the front of the church to 'be delivered and blessed' during the service. The first prayers of deliverance started, praying for the safety of the individuals and that they should join the church. Once the sermon was over, the rest of the service was given over to the testimonies of deliverance that had been enjoyed by followers. The first testimony was given by a middle-aged woman who left her seat and moved to stand at the front of the hall²⁷. Mrs Inyang was a headmistress at a large secondary

²⁶There were several songs that were sung in many ministries and in some orthodox churches.

²⁷The person giving a testimony in the IBM would always stand at the front of the church, whether woman or man. In Cucchiari's study of Pentecostal churches in southern Italy, women gave testimonies from their seats and were not permitted to stand at the front of the hall (Cucchiari 1990:703)

school. She described the family troubles that she had faced in the last year. Her daughter had 'suffered a curse of barrenness' for years. This had caused conflict between her and the paternal relatives of the family into which her daughter had married. The conflict culminated when she had been accused by paternal family members of 'being a witch' and being the cause of her own daughter's problems. She said that she had 'despaired of overcoming the accusations' and felt that the church that she had been attending at the time was too 'spiritually weak' and 'had no power to assist her'. However, since she started attending IBM she felt that she had 'gained greater power to oppose her enemies' and that 'people knew that she was spiritually protected from attack' and she now had several grandchildren²⁸. The testimony generated much applause from the followers. Interspersed with shouts of 'Praise the Lord', such testimonies often encouraged new members to join. As the service drew to a close, there was an 'altar call' when the pastor called all those who had been born-again during the service to come forward and join the ministry. When the service ended the stewards pursued the newcomers who had been 'saved' that day to encourage them to register as members of the IBM²⁹. The stewards recorded their names and addresses after the service and introduced them to a member of the fellowship who lived nearby their house and would visit them during the next week and try to persuade them to return to the ministry³⁰. The service ended at around 1 p.m. having lasted just over three hours. Each section of the service contained the opportunity for deliverance, the prayers, speaking in tongues, offerings, and testimonies, and prosperity.

²⁸Conversion narratives were also relayed between individuals in 'witnessing' and in individual conversations.

²⁹At this point, a steward at the church told me, the converts were born-again rather than full members of IBM. A person only became a full member of a ministry when they were baptised. However baptism was considered by Pentecostals to be less important than being born-again.

³⁰Going to church services incorporated people within a circle of social visiting.

Moving to a new ministry: deliverance and prosperity at the Descendants of Israel

I was quite surprised when, not long after that Boxing Day service, in the spring of 1994, Afiong and Mary started to voice a number of serious criticisms of Reverend Archibong and IBM, and stopped going soon afterwards. My surprise came from the fact that their participation in the service a few weeks before had appeared so fervent to me, including the money that they donated and their desire to pledge more. Indeed only Afiong's scepticism of Reverend Archibong's early years in the Christ African Church struck me as anything that resembled a complaint. However, they told me that they had misgivings about the ministry for a while, but said that open criticism was never voiced during the services, where a unanimity was demanded from followers, otherwise, it was said, the Spirit would not descend during the service³¹. The complaints that they made about IBM found parallels in what some other disaffected followers there had said about the ministry. In short, many converts within the Pentecostal movement in Calabar were younger people who were educated and felt frustrated by the lack of opportunity in the city. IBM had become identified by many younger members struggling to make a living, as the ministry, which increasingly focused upon the needs of an established professional elite.

Afiong and Mary considered that IBM had become distracted from its original objectives and that the original power for deliverance had waned over time. When IBM started, Afiong said it had been a powerful church. IBM had started out in 1992 with a message of deliverance, the need to 'break covenants', that had been first articulated by Reverend Archibong in 1989. In the early months Archibong had been considered a very 'strong'

³¹This perspective corresponds with the disapproval of open conflict in other Pentecostal denominations. Fission and conflict within the ministry are considered to be 'ungodly' (Greenhouse 1986, Williams 1974). Yet because ministries could not accommodate conflict, fission was inevitable and integrative for 'fission causes a church never to leave the Pentecostal fold, for with fission Pentecostal values are confirmed' (Calley 1965:56).

and 'powerful' preacher in Calabar but this power had 'drained away' over time. Afiong suggested that there had been a decline in 'spiritual power' at IBM because deliverance at the ministry had been neglected in the rush to adopt the prosperity gospel. Mrs Ukpabio said other Pentecostal preachers overlooked deliverance and focused upon prosperity. IBM, she said, had become a prosperity church, although 'initially he was not, but when he came to see that other ministers were making it rich, he had to change his mind'. People often said that starting a Pentecostal ministry had become a lucrative business for many in Calabar and that they are often formed by pastors 'who are greedy for money'. In the 1990s many Pentecostal ministries in Calabar were starting to adopt the idea of success in material wealth being gained through the preaching of the 'prosperity gospel' which promised the 'true believer' 'worldly riches' as well as 'spiritual blessings'³². Material wealth could be accumulated and consumed by the individual without spiritual danger, as long as this was 'heavenly wealth' that was gained as a reward for making donations to the ministry. The 'wealth covenant' had started in the United States but was preached by Nigerian pastors like Oyedepo. The covenant preached that wealth could be gained by donating money 'in the covenant', for the person would 'reap the harvest' of wealth later, in direct correspondence to what was given, but in far greater quantities³³. The covenant wealth that came to the individual was not gained through hard work and 'sweating', indeed that was an indication that the money and goods did not come from heaven³⁴. Any large amount of money that appeared without a clear source was said to be 'heavenly' and

³²Meyer shows how some Ghanaian Pentecostals viewed the accumulation of wealth by individuals as necessarily removing wealth from the family unit, because material wealth depleted human resources. This was illustrated in talk of the 'satanic riches' that were gained by people who 'sacrificed' family members. People were warned of the dangers of excessive consumption and told by the pastor that 'a puritan ethic is the only way to escape satanic temptations' (Meyer 1995:237).

³³An example given by Pastor Demus Abrahams, 'do you want money, cars? We can escort you to your success...God made the world of wealth first, then gave it to man, there will be definite testimonies in this ministry next week'. Easter Sunday 1995.

³⁴Pentecostal wealth and status paralleled the ascribed wealth of the 'traditional' elite among the indigenes of Calabar. Some orthodox Christians bought titles in their villages, but Pentecostals I spoke to said that they opted out of traditional titles. They claimed traditionalist indigenes lived off rents and land revenues, compensation payments from government, stipends for traditional offices, and did not work.

there were dedications for business ventures, new buildings and new cars and motorcycles and thanksgiving for businesses³⁵. In services the prosperity teachings were evident in the financing of the ministry through offerings and pledges that were said to assist the followers to enrich themselves. Accumulation of material wealth, even in the midst of poverty, was regarded to reflect the 'blessings' that had been bestowed upon the 'true believer'.

However, Afiong and Mary were aware that prosperity gospel alone did not provide deliverance. The focus upon prosperity had sapped the ambition of the church to expand any further. Instead, they thought that any ministers who started a prosperity church worked hard at the beginning until they had recruited around three hundred members and then they concentrated on extracting money from them. There was no vision to 'move out' and start organisations outside Calabar, to start branch churches elsewhere in Nigeria or to set up contacts with global organisations. What was necessary was for IBM to start a crusade or have a revival meeting, or to train missionaries and send them out. The emphasis upon prosperity, they felt, had come about as Reverend Archibong focused upon the requirements of the wealthier members of the fellowship. For example, Reverend Archibong's concern with the 'city wide' deliverance of Calabar for the large industries and bigger businessmen was remote from the daily requirements of their own mundane experiences. They felt that the wealthier people at IBM who had already appeared to have secured success through gaining professional posts were ignoring their needs and that little could be done to change that as they occupied the lay board of directors at IBM. While older people in professional and business posts constituted a large part of the following at IBM, younger followers like Afiong and Mary were facing further economic crisis, particularly during the strikes of 1994. Mary mentioned the rumour that was widely circulating at that time, of the poor treatment that was dealt to a follower at IBM who had come from a poor family. When the person

³⁵ The Presbyterian Church had also started doing this.

died the family could not afford to pay for the burial costs, but instead of providing a burial, Reverend Archibong was said to have refused to have anything to do with the family. As the people making the complaint left the ministry the matter was not pursued, but the story circulated as an indication of the fact that IBM was no longer providing for all its membership. To neglect a family at burial time was considered by many other Pentecostals to be particularly negligent because it was often at burials that accusations of witchcraft were voiced.

It did not seem to be the prosperity gospel in itself to which Afiong and Mary objected. Indeed earlier that year they had mentioned that they would gladly donate money if they had any. Rather they were more concerned by the thought that the increasing emphasis on prosperity was being made at the expense of deliverance. Afiong considered that Reverend Archibong was open to 'the infiltration of traditional spirits' because of his family background. She argued that because Reverend Archibong had been initiated into secret societies he could still be 'under their influence', that the leaders of these churches are often polygamous, that the pastors use 'magical' diabolic techniques such as placing objects in water and use the Bible to deceive and 'make merchandise of the people'³⁶. Often these pastors are said to be the descendants of 'juju priests' and that they have not renounced the demonic covenants that they inherited. Afiong then used her own knowledge as an indigene to substantiate the claim that she was aware of the 'extent of demonic involvement' because 'if I look at their activities I can tell you the demons responsible'. Ministries, she argued, could be permeated by the spirits of tradition, and that they could start using the scriptures to 'cover up' the involvement with traditional spirits, as they received their deliverance power from elsewhere, 'it was not of God'. She

³⁶There were also widespread criticisms of the prosperity churches by denominations outside the Pentecostal movement, especially in the Aladura churches. In *Lagos Weekend* April 22nd 1994, Baba Aladura Otubu said that 'some churches today advertise wealth rather than advertising the Kingdom of God, such churches have debased the gospel...if I have been asking God for one million naira and I get it in six months and come to testify in the house of God what kind of testimony is that when some people who are forty and above are still struggling with life'.

concluded that Reverend Archibong's past involvement in secret societies, particularly the fact that he was an initiate of the *ekpe* society, was hampering his ability to provide deliverance for followers suffering from *ndem* possession and witchcraft. In contrast to Ukorebi Ukorebi Ita, the son of the *etubom* who also went to a Pentecostal ministry, Afiong never expressed to me any interest in participating in Efik traditions, let alone seeking to reform Efik traditions in accordance with Christian teachings. Afiong argued that continuation of traditional religious practices in Calabar caused witchcraft and *ndem* to permeate 'weaker' churches, not only orthodox and 'white robe' churches³⁷, but also some Pentecostal ministries. Afiong wondered whether IBM was 'a genuine church', that is, 'a church that preaches salvation, restitution sanctification and deliverance, because that was all that Jesus came to do. But where you preach salvation and prosperity and you just drop deliverance, it's not complete and that is why you find IBM members running to other churches'.

Joining the Descendants of Israel Ministry

Afiong was the more forthright in her denunciations of Reverend Archibong. However, in time Mary started to agree with Afiong, saying that the most valued aspect of a ministry was the ability of the pastor to provide deliverance from spiritual attack. They both stopped going to IBM and were attending several different ministries, often at the invitation of friends their own age. Mary then started to attend another Pentecostal church that had recently been started by a 'small girl' who she thought preached with 'far greater power and conviction' and could provide 'protection and deliverance' for her and her family. Elizabeth Ecoma was the same age as Afiong and Mary. Both Afiong and Mary said that they were struck by the power of her preaching. Their description of her as a 'small girl' indicating

³⁷Such as the Cherubim and Seraphim and the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star.

not that she was junior to them, but rather that she provided a contrast to the older male figures who usually held public posts in Calabar, particularly in traditional and military administration.

During 1994 both Afiong and Mary faced a series of difficulties that confirmed for them their initial decision to leave IBM. The bar that Afiong had started in March was not doing well, as no one had enough money to spend, she said. Due to the strikes and oil shortages, daily living had become more expensive. She started closing the shop for much of the day and stopped cooking food to sell there which immediately caused arguments between her and her maternal family who said that she was not working hard enough to make it a success. Then unexpectedly at the start of April her father died of a heart attack as he was driving his car in Calabar. Although he had suffered from hypertension for several years, the death seemed very sudden to his family. Her father was a prominent man in Calabar. He had been an elder at the Christ African Church in Calabar, a title-holder in the Efik society, and he had started a local development society in Akpabuyo, the local government area in the eastern part of Calabar. He had originally trained to be a tailor, but later set up business as a football pools agent and was the first chairman of the Pools Agent Association. Immediately after his death family disputes started over rights to property in Calabar and for a while I saw little of Afiong as she had decided to move back into one of the houses owned by the paternal family on the other side of the city. When I met her by chance later she told me that she was afraid that her paternal relatives were trying to deny her claim to her father's houses and throughout the summer she was involved in court cases to decide the sharing out of the properties between the children.

In mid 1994 Mary told me she no longer went to IBM and had become a fully baptised member of another ministry, the Descendants of Israel. On several occasions she told me about her enthusiasm for the 'powerful' preaching at the ministry. Then, suddenly in the summer of 1994, Mary's

mother died, leaving her and her sisters to manage the house and look after their younger siblings and their own children, and deal with the preparations for the burial. I was in Scotland when Mary's mother died and when the burial took place, and when I returned to Calabar in August she had become far more involved in the ministry. The death had brought tensions into the extended family and her paternal uncle and aunt who lived on State Housing, claimed ownership of the house where Mary lived and said that she and her sisters would have to leave it³⁸. Then a paternal female relative confessed to being a witch and asked for help from the maternal family, saying that Mary's paternal aunt was also a witch and a far more powerful one. At the funeral the paternal aunt did not approach the maternal relatives and Mary said she was behaving in such an evasive way because she had a guilty conscience. After the funeral the paternal relatives went to Mary's house and demanded that she and her sisters leave and hand the house back to them. A loud argument started at which Mary made threats to burn down their house and she later attacked one of them physically. The police were called and Mary and her sisters were taken to the station. The police said the brothers and sisters of Mary's father owned the house, but Mary's sister's boyfriend paid bail and they were released.

When the police heard about the witchcraft accusations, they said this was a family matter and they did not want to deal with it in the courts. This response was frustrating for Mary, firstly, because she was now the person accused of assault, yet in her opinion she was the victim of a more serious assault by witchcraft which was going unaddressed. With no response from the police, Mary and the paternal relatives with whom she was in dispute, decided to take their case to the *Muri*, the traditional ruler of the Efut territory on which the house was built, to ask him to judge the case. In his compound, the Nigerian flag flew to indicate the 'customary court' that

³⁸ In Calabar land was inherited through the patrilineage. People were close to maternal relations who were considered to be less competitive than paternal ones. Mary said that her troubles with her paternal relatives went back to when her father had died ten years ago. After her father's burial the same relatives had tried to remove the TV set from her house but were stopped by the police.

heard local cases in Efut Ekondo. Mary and the opposing relations all went to the court to discuss the procedure for finding the witch. The *Muri* told them that the accused witch was made to swear on the Bible and that if she were guilty she would be struck down by *mbukpo* (ancestors). However, while Mary accepted this, she insisted that if the witch were found innocent or if she confessed the judgement of the customary court was not sufficient. She wanted the witch to be cleared of witchcraft by going to a 'living church' for deliverance. In her opinion the customary court could condemn a person found to be a witch, but the court could not 'save' or 'deliver' a person from witchcraft. But the family decided not to pursue the consultation with the *Muri*, partly because the fees requested were considered too expensive, and because Mary was not pleased with the fact that the church was not going to be involved at all. However, this refusal to go to before the customary court was immediately seized upon by the paternal relatives, who started saying that Mary was to blame, and suggesting that she was partially responsible for the conflict in the family. The paternal relatives maintained that they were going to take the house away from her anyway.

It was at this point that Mary decided to take the matter elsewhere. She told me that the paternal aunt who she accused of witchcraft was a member of IBM, but although someone had told the pastor's wife that the witch was going to IBM, the ministry had decided that 'nothing was to be done about her'. This was also the view taken by Elizabeth Ecoma, the founder of Descendants of Israel Ministry. After Mary's mother died, Mary told Elizabeth about the disputes with the paternal relatives and Elizabeth pronounced that 'God hadn't called her mother', that instead 'other demonic forces' had been responsible for her death. Elizabeth went on to accuse IBM of 'harbouring witches, just like the Presbyterian Church does'. She said that it was widely known that IBM had become prey to demonic powers and that 'witches' were present at the services 'and nothing was being done to rebuke them'. An opinion that clearly mirrored what Mary was thinking

about the dispute herself. The matter continued throughout September while the paternal relatives pursued the court case against Mary, but eventually this fell apart as well. Mary was left with her house, free from assault charges, but with the rankling suspicions that the witchcraft had not really been dealt with. She often said that she still felt the paternal relatives wished her harm.

Offices, education and prosperity preaching at Descendants of Israel

I felt that Mary was so frustrated with her experiences at the state courts and the customary courts run by the *Muri* that she became far more involved in the new ministry. Afiong and two other friends, Atim and Grace, also started to go to Descendants of Israel regularly with her, although out of the four of them it was Mary who attended the most and who had become involved in the running of the ministry by the end of the year. In this final section of the chapter I assess why Mary had come to feel that the new ministry was so appropriate to her at that time. I argue that the ministry provided Mary with the social arena within which to augment her professional identity and the protection from supernatural attacks. I was immediately struck by the similarities between Elizabeth and Mary's social status. They were both young mothers, bringing up children with the assistance of maternal relatives, who worked as part-time traders in haberdashery goods. At the end of August 1994, Mary often said that she would like to take me to meet Elizabeth, and that I should go to the church with her. One day as I drove through Calabar I passed an electrical goods shop and saw Mary talking to a woman in a car and they beckoned me over to join them. I stopped and was introduced to Elizabeth. They were looking for electronic keyboards for the band at the church during Elizabeth's lunch hour. We drove back together to the OMPADEC office in State Housing where she worked as a radio operator providing radio communications

during the hours when the telephone system was not working. I was invited to visit her at her house later in the week.

I met Elizabeth at her small house. She was divorced and lived in a compound just on the edge of the city with her two small children. She told me that she had been born in Enugu in 1965 where her late father was a policeman before the Civil War. In 1975 she went to Lagos to stay with her maternal aunt and uncle for primary school. Her mother was a trader, working very hard, going to Lagos to buy earrings, towels, pots, and clothing. With this she paid the school fees. During this period Elizabeth started to have dreams. She would fight and defeat her opponents but at that point said that she 'did not know the meaning of spiritual things' and so had been unaware that 'defeating your opponents in the dream means that you are more powerful spiritually'. After primary school she returned to Calabar stay with mother and went to secondary school at the Holy Child Catholic School in Calabar.

She started going to church at the older Pentecostal church, the Mount Zion Lighthouse Full Gospel on January 10th 1988. In 1990 she was 'anointed by the Spirit' and began to sense 'demonic' spirits all around her³⁹. She started a small interdenominational prayer group, while still a member of Mount Zion. The prayer group met in people's homes, then at Ironbar primary school for a year. By 1993 the prayer group had more members and had started to meet in the primary school on Mayne Avenue which they rented from the government each week. The prayer group was 'searching and praying' for land, but 'land was not yet seen', until a member arranged for the use of a building plot on Eta Agbo Layout, a site on the edge of the UNICAL campus. Since the registration she said that the ministry had gained more members. In 1994 there were around six hundred and seventy

³⁹When she had joined Mount Zion she had been encouraged to put in for GCE examinations at a school in Akampka, and as soon as she left the hospital she took the papers and passed six out of seven. She returned to Mount Zion but left in May 1993, when a new pastor started who was 'envious of my gifts'. When she took part in prayer sessions at the church and it was acknowledged that she was 'powerful in spirit'.

recorded members. There were two main services each week, the Sabbath service on Saturday and the Wednesday healing service. At the main Saturday service at 6.30 a.m. there was usually an attendance of around five hundred people. One Saturday, in September 1994, the expansion of the ministry was marked by the 'launching day' for the electrical equipment they had bought for the band. The church was full, men and women seated separately on either side of the central aisle. They sang songs and the preachers were sprayed with money. The followers were predominantly young people in their twenties and thirties who used to attend other Pentecostal ministries.

In the later part of 1994 Mary was made the Treasurer of the ministry. She was responsible for keeping the books, recording donations and arranging for the bank accounts and my impression was that the post was very important to her as an acknowledgement of her integrity and honesty, which had been questioned during the recent family disputes. When Mary was made the treasurer, she said that holding the post was also of wider significance in her work as a trader. This was because the post assisted in forming social networks and providing a guarantee of her integrity as a trusted businesswoman. She also said that there were few other areas in which she could take up an office such as that. There was a hierarchy of offices within the ministry held by both women and men⁴⁰. In addition to the treasurer, there were six elders, one evangelist and one 'reverend' who all preached during services, and three lay elders. There was also a choir, which had a separate treasurer. A chairman was selected from among the choristers and a patron who was from outside the ministry. The ministry provided an arena for young people to hold office and manage budgets that in orthodox churches and larger ministries, like IBM, were always in the hands of older people. The fund-raising was entrepreneurial, in contrast to the '*kobo kobo*' ('penny penny') collections at the PCN.

⁴⁰These offices had to be included in the paperwork that was completed for registration.

Mary said that she valued the chance to make friends among the educated younger people who made up most of the following at the ministry. Many were migrants who were usually well educated and were looking for ways to educate their children, especially as the state schools were often closed. The ministry provided a social arena for these interests and activities to be realised. In this way the Descendants of Israel Ministry was similar to the other ministries in this study, except that it was founded and run by a younger, migrant woman. Both Afiong and Mary said that the church was a place in which they used English, which indicated its social status. Speaking and reading 'good' English, rather than speaking pidgin English or a vernacular language, was considered by most people in Calabar to be a primary indication that a person had received a 'proper education' or aspired to 'progress'. Like Pastor Abraham, Elizabeth Ecoma used English to preach in church services. There would be a Bible study course before the Sunday service, and the text was referred to and quoted from throughout the subsequent service. People would be called forward to read from the Bible, and passages would be suggested for Bible study at home. Certainly, to take up an office in the ministry, it was necessary to be literate. Some followers had rudimentary literacy skills and had only primary school education, but saw the ministry as a place where they could develop those skills. Language usage marked these moves towards a modern identity by Pentecostals, with the change from vernacular language to English, a transformation which often corresponds with the move to the city for migrants.

However, it was clear that while the followers at Descendants of Israel Ministry were looking to 'progress' most had not yet achieved high professional status. At IBM a large proportion of followers had professional posts outside the ministry. The followers at the Descendants of Israel Ministry were more similar in educational status to the people at the Liberty Gospel Ministry than to the people at IBM. They came from more diverse backgrounds than those at IBM, but all had had a primary or secondary school education. In the fellowship at Descendants of Israel Ministry there

were petty traders, *alalok* riders and labourers, as well as professional people. Indeed, because of late payment of salaries by the State Government many professional people were often surviving on precarious incomes they supplemented with petty trading. One primary school teacher I met there had a stall at the market where she sold second-hand shoes. Among members that I met over the months were an M.B.A. economic consultant, a banker with a B.Sc. in finance, a nurse, a Ph.D in Fishery Sciences at the University, and a civil servant at the city museum. The income difference between professional elites and the petty traders was becoming less marked every day and many school teachers at Descendants of Israel Ministry told me that they had started market stalls because the schools had been closed for so long and they had received no salary.

The educational level of the participants at Descendants of Israel Ministry was similar to that at other ministries where I conducted the questionnaire surveys. When responding to the questionnaire about their occupation, several people had told me that their job was 'pastoring' or 'preaching'. Similar responses were given during interviews and conversations with people at the Descendants of Israel. For example, Edet a thirty-five year old from Essien Udim in Akwa Ibom State, was married with children and his family attended the ministry with him. In the past they had attended the Apostolic Church but since arriving in Calabar they went to Descendants of Israel Ministry three times a week. He said that they had chosen the ministry because 'it teaches the word of God undilutedly', and 'practices the word of God according to principles of the Bible with the early church as a model'. Edet said that his occupation was 'a preacher', and claimed that he often preached at different ministries in the city as well as at Descendants of Israel Ministry, and that he had also been a treasurer in a different ministry. He had been born-again in 1975 at an evangelical crusade that came to Calabar. He said that Pentecostalism had enabled him to 'discover his spiritual gifts' and provide a direction, through locating the 'plan of God for my life'. Other followers at the Descendants of Israel Ministry had received a

secondary education and had GCE or WEAC examination passes. One was at UNICAL, but many followers like Edet said they had received a 'Christian education', that is, Bible study classes at a ministry. Inyang, a forty-year-old Ibibio man who was originally from Eket, Akwa Ibom State, was a friend of Edet who went to Descendants of Israel Ministry. He said that he had had a 'western, Christian education' and stated his occupation was 'teaching and ministering'. The man described himself as a 'helper' in the church and he said that he considered the post 'the most important job' that he could do. He made sure that he attended the ministry five times a week. For these respondents, being in the ministry provided them with an occupation that they valued. Migrants said that they were especially concerned to take up valued posts in the church for it was an achievement that made their migrancy worthwhile. Many Ibibio and Igbo migrants said that the older Efik indigenes did not value education and professional advancement as much as they did, because the older indigenes could rely upon income from renting land and property.

Both Elizabeth Ecoma and Mary said they were optimistic that the Descendants of Israel Ministry was 'growing into a church, a big organisation' and Elizabeth said that she hoped that next year she would be able to become a full time pastor and leave her 'official job' as a radio operator at OMPADEC where she worked five days a week⁴¹. Elizabeth Ecoma said that her ambition was for the ministry to 'become a big church'. She said she had already earned 21,000 naira at the ministry in the last year, equivalent to a year's salary for a teacher and far more reliable as an income. She said that she wanted to study overseas 'on the different manifestations of spirits who are not of God' and said she had heard that Christians did not need to have a visa to go abroad to go to study a Bible College in the United States. She said that the strong deliverance message

⁴¹In Calabar the telephone system was usually not working and firms used radio operators to communicate with offices in other cities. However, she was aware that in the end of 1994 the status of OMPADEC in Cross River State was in the balance, as the NNPC had not submitted an oil production quota for the state and there was a possibility that staff at the Calabar office would be cut back and she would lose her job.

that she preached meant that she was starting to preach a 'powerful gospel of prosperity' since she 'received a prophecy' in which she was told to 'build a covenant box...if there were persistent money problems I should pray nearby the box...the box has nothing in it, but it is a sacred box that we Christians believe in'. Later in the year Mary told me that it had been Elizabeth's ability to confirm the identity of the people among her paternal relatives who were witches, and her success in 'dealing with them', that had persuaded her to join the ministry. Mary's wealthier relatives at IBM were 'witches' but had been allowed to continue attending that ministry without being 'disciplined' for the harm that they had caused her. She felt this reflected the priority that Reverend Archibong had placed upon the support of wealthier sectors of the population. However, she thought that at Descendants of Israel Ministry there was the 'power' to bring about 'deliverance' from 'spiritual attacks' and 'family entanglements'. Being born again was considered to be a radical yet fragile transformation, which required participating in a ministry to prevent 'backsliding' into the previous 'unsaved' state. At IBM people were being born-again and were incorporated into the ministry, but they were not being 'saved', a perpetual deliverance was needed from 'demonic' indigenous spirits and witchcraft before a 'progression directed and managed by God' could occur. It was necessary for followers to go several times per week⁴² not just turn up at the Sunday services. The success of the ministry depended upon leadership, particularly the ability of the founder to discipline the church. The leader could be expected to produce 'blessings' through 'a promise, power and product works of the Holy Spirit as experienced by the Apostles after Pentecost'. This would 'add life and power to that dull and cool thing we inherited' from the European ministries. Mary said that she had expected Pastor Archibong to be 'effective' in finding 'spiritual' solutions⁴³, but it was only since she went to Descendants of Israel Ministry that she felt the

⁴²All the converts I spoke to had previously been members of another Christian denomination, a fact which led the Pentecostal ministries to be nicknamed 'sheep stealers' by the other churches.

⁴³A leaflet at Greater Revival leaflet promised 'you'll be taught how to receive genuine power that will keep you triumphing in all your day to day activities'.

influence of demonic forces were waning and added that 'as a child of God I am not afraid of spiritual attacks of this sort...the forces falling very drastically in Calabar are being clamped down by Christians who are fighting it twenty-four hours with prayers. As a Christian I am not afraid of their spiritual attacks'. Since being in the ministry she said that she had 'gained a sense of direction' and the teaching and deliverance of the ministry 'reveals all secret plans of the devil and gives me overall victory over all devilish plans'.

Modern and traditional religious identities within the Descendants of Israel Ministry

In Descendants of Israel Ministry, as in the other four ministries discussed in this chapter, witchcraft attack and *ndem* possession were not considered to be 'traditional beliefs' that were irrelevant in modern contexts, but rather served as interpretations of people's contemporary social and economic experiences. The significance of the Pentecostal interpretation of the traditional and the modern has to be interpreted within the specific religious and economic history of Calabar. Englund has argued that the Comaroffs' analysis of witchcraft as a culturally specific argument about modernity 'fails to follow consistently the notion of multiple modernities' (1996:273), pointing out that the impact of the global economy on local worlds has had a vastly diverse history throughout different parts of Africa. Englund's approach to the study of modernity is relevant in the analysis of the impact of the global economy in Calabar. Calabar was, since the fifteenth century, an international port and part of a global trade network, meaning that the city was already part of a global economy before the nineteenth century. In this context the Christian mission was not perceived wholly as a modernising force by the Efik kings who invited the mission to set up a building in the city. Indeed, the missionaries were soon perceived as

perpetuating traditional institutions during the colonial era, through their early co-operation with the Efik kings, and the incorporation of the traditional rulers within the organisation of the Presbyterian Church, an interpretation of Christian history in Calabar that is emphasised by the Pentecostal ministries.

Whereas the mission considered itself to be able to incorporate tradition within its overall project of modernisation in Calabar, and argued that spiritual attacks were caused by lack of education and would decline over time, Pentecostals like Elizabeth and Mary point to the fact that spiritual attacks exist alongside Christianity in the contemporary Calabar. The temporal framework of the mission, which saw traditional practices and superstitious beliefs declining in the face of Christian teaching, is replaced by a Pentecostal emphasis upon the spiritual battles being fought in the present, with the individual believer being the site for these battles. Both *ndem* possession and witchcraft are operating in the modern world, and threaten the Pentecostalist. The definition of *ndem* possession as an aspect of traditional religion, that is in decline, first defined by the Presbyterian mission, is echoed by some Pentecostals, especially those who come from a Presbyterian church background and consider that 'religious tradition' can be conserved as part of an indigenous cultural heritage. However, other Pentecostals, notably migrants from the rural hinterland, consider *ndem* possession to be a force of equal, if not greater danger than witchcraft. Such Pentecostals do not place *ndem* possession as part of a traditional set of beliefs that they can disregard and put behind them. Instead, what the Pentecostal ministry, such as Descendants of Israel Ministry, offers the follower is a template in which 'African' or 'Christian' forms of interpretation of spiritual attack are contrasted with western or non-Christian, secular interpretations. This is not a historical template, but instead one which contrasts two ways of thinking in the present, with a cross-cultural awareness. The view has an impact because most people in Calabar consider that the missionaries were misguided in assuming that the

problem of spiritual attack would diminish with the introduction of 'modern' education.

Elizabeth Ecoma acknowledged quite openly that, according to western science, her beliefs in spiritual attack were entirely unfounded. When a man was brought to the church 'for treatment' in September 1994, Elizabeth diagnosed 'bad spirits'. Elizabeth said that it was common for people to bring the troublesome cases of possession or witchcraft attack within their extended family to the church, some families who were migrants had even brought relatives from their home towns to Calabar. One woman had brought her nephew from Owerri to the church because she thought that he was 'possessed by demons'. I first saw the man one day before a service when he started a scuffle with stewards at the church. He was chained by the ankles and sat outside the building during the service. Elizabeth said that he was 'being kept in detention' in the church by the 'prayer team' who had volunteered to watch him and that she went each day to pray with him. The 'problem' that he suffered from was 'bad spirits' and she would pray with him until he 'starts to recognise himself' again. She added that in the psychiatric hospital in Calabar the man had been diagnosed as 'having a genetic problem...which caused depression'. This she considered was the 'western view', whereas she adopted 'the Christian view, the African view...and we, as Christians, see it as bad spirits'. 'Spiritual attack' was not therefore placed within a comparative framework that opposed tradition and modernity, but instead was located within a set of distinctions based upon cultural distinctions between Africans and Europeans and religious distinctions, contrasting a secular and Christian perspective. At the heart of debates about 'spiritual attack' in Calabar was not only the question how to cope with life in the 'modern' city, although the transformations in social life brought about by migration were addressed in Pentecostal conversion, but rather how modernity should be defined. There are many modernities, and often Pentecostals were engaged in re-defining the discourse of progression from 'traditional belief' to 'modern' Christianity that was

articulated by the Presbyterian mission.

There were different approaches to this re-definition within the Pentecostal movement. Ukorebi Ukorebi Ita explicitly perpetuated the mission tolerance of 'tradition' as 'cultural', and often Efik Pentecostals were considered by other Pentecostals most likely to advocate such an approach. I have shown how the way that particular Pentecostals addressed *ndem* possession and witchcraft was informed by their place within a network of social relationships. Different aspects of social identity, namely gender, age and ethnicity inform debates on the 'demonic attacks' that many Pentecostals in Calabar said they experienced within their extended family. Many Pentecostals were migrants, middle aged married women who had moved from a natal home to live within another patrilineage, as well as younger men and women. Both groups had traversed social distance and transformed their social identity through migration, marriage or education. Those who considered themselves under the threat of witchcraft and possession contrasted their own vulnerability with the security of the older indigenous men who were considered by Pentecostals in Calabar to exert the most powerful witchcraft. I have shown that indigenous and migrant Pentecostals negotiated graded degrees of separation from family *ndem*. Indigenes like Ukorebi Ukorebi Ita were happy to see the conversion from *ndem* practices to Christianity as a gradual process of reform, while other Pentecostals, such as Inyang and Eno, the married couple who had migrated to Calabar from Akwa Ibom State⁴⁴, considered that their conversion fostered a complete separation from the *ndem* world and the threat of possession.

In Meyer's study of Ghanaian Pentecostals in Peki and Accra, urban

⁴⁴Many Pentecostals had migrated to Calabar after war ended in 1970 to find work or attend secondary school or university. The vast majority of Pentecostals in the ministries I studied, both migrants and indigenes, were educated people under forty years. However, in Calabar many people felt that they were under the authority of the traditional rules. They contrasted their sense of separation from the older generation who they said continued 'traditional practices', sustained by 'demonic powers' and within the family perpetuated 'entanglements' with *ndem*.

migrants fear witchcraft attacks from their relatives in the home villages who, they feel, are demanding a share of the wealth they have acquired in the city (1998). Meyer argues that the born-again conversion denotes a 'break from the past' that is the spiritual counterpart to the social separation from the demands of the village. Instead of feeling under pressure to provide money for a village ceremony, the born-again convert can refuse to participate, saying that their Pentecostal ministry does not permit them to take part in 'traditional' ceremonies. Cutting ties with rural kin and deflecting their material demands was a concern for migrants to Calabar such as Inyang and Eno. However, the disputes within Mary's family over the ownership of the house indicates that Pentecostals also seek protection from witchcraft attacks from well-to-do relatives who live in the city. Witchcraft attacks occur within the families of Pentecostals who are indigenes and have always lived in the city. In fact many people in the surrounding rural areas consider Calabar to be a greater site of witchcraft activity than the villages. It was migrants' fear of spiritual attack when they reached Calabar which prompted their conversion, and not simply fear of witchcraft emanating from the villages they had left.

Spiritual attacks were part of contemporary life in Calabar. The process by which deliverance was achieved and maintained was represented using a temporal framework. The demonic attack from *ndem* pulled people back into the past through the covenants made by their ancestors, whereas witchcraft blocked progress forward in the present. In contrast deliverance at the ministry enabled the convert to 'progress' in the new social arena of the ministry. The ancestral pacts were replaced as people joined a new, forward-looking group, the 'descendants' who would 'inherit' educational achievement and prosperity within the urban economy. The Pentecostal ministry also provided a new means whereby deliverance could be gained without the traditional *abiaidion* (witchfinder). It was considered more effective than the state apparatus of the 'customary court' of the traditional ruler and the state police. Witchcraft was perceived by Pentecostals to be

an anti-social force emanating from greedy, selfish individuals within their extended family or the state administration. While the Presbyterian mission had seen the conversion to Christianity as a part of a historical progression away from tradition towards modernity, Pentecostals in the 1990s instead focused upon the difficulties of the present moment, so questioning the very terms by which European missions had defined and distinguished the traditional and the modern.

Plate 6.

Landmark tree, Spring Road, Calabar January 1995.



Chapter Seven 'Ninety-nine years back rent': Debates about Efik patronage of the Presbyterian Church

Introduction

An immediate subject of conversation between new acquaintances in Calabar was whether either person was born again. The topic was obviously popular among new friends in the Pentecostals ministries, but it was also common among other Christians meeting for the first time, even those who rarely went to church. The interest shown in attributing born again identity to self or others highlighted the extent to which Pentecostals had raised questions in Calabar about the definition of the 'real Christian'. Just saying that a person was 'a Christian' was considered by many born again converts to be far too general and opaque a description. They argued that it was possible for a person to say that they were Christian yet never attend church and even participate in the rituals performed at traditional ceremonies. In contrast, Pentecostals argued, only the born again convert was a 'real Christian', having experienced an inner spiritual conversion which transformed their social actions. As they themselves said, 'they practised what they preached'. To many Pentecostals being born again meant acquiring a distinct social and religious consciousness that was not just different from other denominations but was considered to be unequivocally 'right'. Becoming born-again meant being part of a religious movement considered beyond the web of syncretism and corruption that compromised doctrine and social organisation¹ in the orthodox denominations and wider public life. Those within the Presbyterian Church who were not born again were considered by many Pentecostals to be either naive about the workings of 'demonic powers' in Calabar, or complicit in their perpetuation. Many Pentecostals

¹People sometimes claimed that others 'faked' being born again in professional situations in which they felt an outsider so that they were perceived as 'spiritually strong' and 'resisted demonic attacks'. 'Born again' phrases were widely used.

dismissed members of the 'orthodox'² churches as 'nominal' rather than 'real' Christians. A 'nominal' Christian 'inherited' church affiliation through family ties rather than achieving it as the result of an individual spiritual experience. The 'nominal' Christian was thought likely to incorporate non-Christian practices into the 'orthodox' mission churches and thereby introduce 'evil spirits' that remained 'unconquered'. As a young woman neighbour from Greater Revival Ministry told me, many Christians who attended Duke Town Presbyterian Church 'would be horrified to know the God that they were serving'³.

This chapter is about the impact that people in the Pentecostal ministries in Calabar exerted beyond the confines of their own fellowships, in particular upon the growth of a born again section within the parishes of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria (PCN). I show how born again people within the PCN were advocating changes to the financial organisation and modes of worship to make them similar to Pentecostal ministries (Meyer 1994). I also show how Pentecostalism within the PCN addressed what many born again people described as the 'problem of traditional government' in Calabar and especially the use of Presbyterian churches for ceremonies involving traditional officeholders, such as the coronation of the Efik *Obong* in Duke Town Church. This critique was loudly voiced by migrants who had settled in the city since the 1970s and found the PCN parishes 'too dominated by indigenes'. The Presbyterian Church in Calabar was known as 'the Efik church', or the 'Calabar Church', throughout southern Nigeria, and many migrants and younger indigenes felt the PCN took the membership of Calabar inhabitants for granted, by 'assuming that due respect and membership was owed to them'. At the 'Calabar Festival' in December 1994 organised by the Council of *Etuboms*, which many non-indigenes said was more accurately termed the 'Efik Festival', the close

² 'Orthodox' was used by Pentecostals to describe churches that did not preach Holy Spirit 'infilling'.

³ Some born-again people said the 'white robe' churches, such as the Cherubim and Seraphim and the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star, 'worshipped water spirits' as the source of their spiritual power.

relations between the Presbyterian Church and the *Obong's* Palace⁴ were highlighted when the *Obong* and his entourage were blessed at Duke Town Church. The Calabar Festival further provoked debates about the part played by the PCN in the perpetuation of Efik 'tradition', a concern that was evident in two incidents I discuss below that happened in the first three months of 1995. The first incident occurred in January and February 1995, when a tree on the headland near Hope Waddell Training Institute (HWTI), which many said had been brought from Jamaica and planted by the mission, was burnt down. The second event was a dispute about the participation of the *ekpe* masqueraders in the centenary celebrations of the Hope Waddell Training Institute (HWTI) in March 1995.

The Pentecostal movement in the PCN was anti-syncretic, and represented the PCN as a syncretist church that had 'mixed Christianity with Efik religion'. The 'cultural heritage' of the Efiks was redefined by Pentecostals as a wholly religious heritage incompatible with Christianity. Pentecostals questioned whether it was possible to be a 'real Christian' and an initiate of the *ekpe* society, or even to attend a relative's wedding where libation was poured to the ancestors? I show how 'traditional' PCN members countered this criticism by arguing that their church was 'original', both in the sense that it was the first Christian church founded in Calabar and, making a virtue of syncretism, by claiming that it is the distinct synthesis of aspects of Efik cosmology with Christianity which was forged by the early Scottish missionaries. I argue that the questions raised by the Pentecostals, within and outside the PCN, about the congruity of Christian and 'traditional' religious practices both problematised and reconfigured patterns of interaction between religious and 'traditional' political authority in Calabar. I conclude that the Pentecostal debate within the PCN raised questions about the local, national and global contexts of religious affiliation. The 'traditional'

⁴The Calabar Festival, December 1994 was described as a show of support for the *Obong* after disputes among chieftaincy fees. Some *etuboms* had alleged the *Obong* kept payments of fees and not distributed them around the *etuboms*.

indigenous elite in Calabar and in the PCN represented church affiliation based within a local context. The reformed PCN emphasised the denomination as a national organisation while the born again ministries offered participation in a global religious movement.

The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria in Calabar: traditional and born-again Presbyterians

In the early 1990s the doctrines and practices of the Pentecostal movement became popular within the PCN in Calabar and some were incorporated within the services at Duke Town Presbyterian Church. The Presbyterian congregation and clergy I met when I arrived in Calabar soon told me about the new Pentecostal worship that had been introduced to Duke Town Church by Reverend Ukeagbu since his induction in 1990⁵. In response to these new forms of worship the congregation and clergy at Duke Town Church, and in other parishes in Calabar, had split into two broad groups; the traditionalists who opposed many of the changes and wanted the continuation of the 'Scottish' services and the born-again Presbyterians who wanted the PCN to adopt Pentecostal practices. The debate between these two groups dominated church politics from 1990 onwards and was very prominent between 1993 and 1995. The Pentecostal worship that started at Duke Town Church in 1990 contrasted greatly with the accounts of the church services ministered by the Scottish Presbyterian missionaries

⁵Certain born-again practices and church organisational forms were debated by the 1994 General Assembly and not all were accepted by the PCN. Born-again Presbyterians raised questions about the form of child baptism practiced in the PCN, wanting to replace child baptism with a child dedication ceremony common in Pentecostalist ministries. They also argued that adult baptisms should be by total immersion. When the issue of infant baptism was raised at the 1994 General Assembly, the Assembly confirmed that several types of baptism were recognised by the church, and these included; 'sprinkling, immersion and pouring'. The PCN argued that to end the practice of child baptism and practice adult baptism only would require the construction of new facilities at the river where adult baptism was carried out. Families would then have to bear the expense of hosting two family celebrations for each child, the child dedication and the later adult baptism by total immersion.

who had worked in Calabar between 1929-1967, several of whom I interviewed before going to do fieldwork. When I arrived in Calabar I had many letters and gifts to deliver to the friends of the missionaries and consequently, many of the first Presbyterians I met were older members of the congregations who had grown up attending services organised 'in the Scottish style' and who had been educated by Scottish missionaries. I was told by one person that a 'Scottish' evensong was still held at the chapel of the old mission school, the Hope Waddell Training Institute, and consisted of a short service of around one hour and a half, with hymns sung in Efik and English. However, the service at the Hope Waddell Chapel proved to be quite untypical, for in every other PCN parish I visited in Calabar the new Pentecostal practices were very evident in the services and were causing dispute within the church.

The dispute between the 'traditional' and 'born again' Presbyterians was most marked at Duke Town Church, one of the oldest parishes in Calabar and the target of a 'modernisation programme' run from the headquarters of the PCN in Aba, Imo State, to reform 'traditional' parishes. Duke Town Church was the oldest church building in Calabar Town and, in both its location and construction, the church was a monument to the history of co-operation between the Scottish mission and the Efik landowners. The church had been built in 1854 from wood and iron donated by Scottish congregations and shipped to Calabar. The completed church building was in the architectural style of Presbyterian churches being built across Scotland in the mid-nineteenth century, with a spire and stained glass, the interior lined with pews, choir stalls and stained wood panelling. The building was in the centre of Duke Town, part of Calabar that was Efik territory and where land for the church and the labour to build it, had been donated to the mission by the Efik Chief Eyamba V. Duke Town was one of the old parts of Calabar, and contained many of the wooden 'storey' or 'Liverpool' houses imported by Efik traders from Britain. Opposite the entrance to the church was the main *ekpe* lodge, fronted by an open

courtyard where a large ship's bell hung from a wooden frame⁶. Close by were other Presbyterian parishes at Garden Street, Old Town and Henshaw Town⁷. The old buildings in Duke Town all faced towards the Calabar River, having been built at a time when the river was the focus of trade, and people sought out views from the headland to gain early glimpses of approaching ships. The church was on the side of a steep hill that led down from the manse on the headland known as Mission Hill to the 'beach' of the Calabar River. The land then climbed again towards the northwest where another headland faced the church and where the colonial treasury had been built and which in the 1990s housed the Calabar Museum. Alongside the museum was the State Governor's residence and the State Guesthouse, brand new buildings constructed for the new Governor and Deputy-Governor for the handover to democratic rule in 1993 and by 1994 occupied by the Military State Administrator Flight Lieutenant Agboneni.

I first went to Duke Town Church with Mrs Bassey, a middle aged woman who had been going to church there all her life and who was baptised and married there⁸. Mrs Bassey sent her driver to collect me, and he drove us through the narrow streets of Duke Town to the church. There was no space to park the car, so he dropped us at the gate. The service was due to start at ten o'clock and, unlike Pentecostal services, was not preceded by Bible study or impromptu singing. Instead people congregated on the small piece of lawn just outside the churchdoors, wearing formal clothes, many women wearing large hats and dresses in the European style. We bought a service booklet for two *naira* from two women sitting at a table near the

⁶European traders often gave ships bells as gifts to the Efik chiefs and middlemen that they traded with.

⁷There were few Pentecostal ministries in the vicinity. Partially this was because there was not much empty space available. Also because the area of town was said to be more 'traditional' closer to the water, where *ndem* were. One ministry had started at the beach and the pastor there, who was an Efik, told me that he had founded the church there because he wanted to be at the heart of the traditional centre of power in Calabar.

⁸Mrs Bassey also went to Pentecostal churches. Her family connections drew her to the PCN. With teaching colleagues she often went to Pentecostal ministries. She attended IBM with fellow teachers from ANCOTS. Many middle-aged people maintained two allegiances in the same way. Younger Presbyterians appeared more ready to stop going to the PCN altogether when they found a Pentecostal ministry that they liked.

door. The booklet was very similar to that sold at a Scottish church, it was made of thick paper stapled together to form a small booklet, the front page giving the names and addresses of the church minister, elders, and office holders such as the treasurer and secretary. Inside the booklet were the verses of the hymns to be sung that day, some to be sung in Efik others in English, as well as the prayers, sermon, references to Bible passages and announcements for members of the Presbyterian Young Peoples' Association of Nigeria (PYPAN), the Women's Guild and the parish session. Inside the building the wood panelling made the church dark, only a little light could get through the small stained glass windows placed high up on the walls. The back of the church was illuminated by a cross made from two strip lights. It was incredibly hot inside, despite the fans that spun on the beams of the high ceiling, as over four hundred people had crammed into the pews on the ground floor and balcony and many latecomers were left without a seat and had to stand in the back porch. The seating arrangements demarcated people by their age, the older generations occupying front pews⁹.

Once the service started it was clear that it would contain more than was listed in the booklet, the format of which seemed unchanged since the days of the Scottish mission. The service lasted for three and a half hours and combined more formal 'Scottish style' worship with the newly introduced Pentecostal prayers and songs. The choir sang formal choral music accompanied by organ music as they trooped into the church and during some prayer sessions and communion. However, the congregation and choir also sang many of the popular Pentecostal songs, such as 'Superpower', particularly during the two offerings when people moved up the central aisle to place coins on the collection plate at the front, an event

⁹ The first two lines of pews were taken up by members of the Women's Guild who always sat together, they were mostly older women in their fifties, whose husbands were members of the church but were not regular attenders. Mrs Bassey told me that other families always sat in the same pews their families had occupied for decades, but because she often went to services at Pentecostal ministries she did not have a place where she usually sat, so we found a place about halfway down the church.

when people took obvious pleasure in the music, dancing and greeting friends. The service was also lengthened by the fact that the sermon preached in English was simultaneously translated into Efik by an elder standing to the right of the pulpit. The use of Efik in the PCN did not indicate that there were fewer English speakers in the congregation, for I never met a non-English speaker at the church, nor heard of anyone who could not speak English well enough to follow the service. Rather, hymns and prayers in Efik and the translation of the sermon were described by Mrs Bassey as the 'traditional' parts of the service that had been included since mission days¹⁰. The impact of Pentecostalism was evident once more towards the end of the service when a prayer of blessing by Reverend Ukeagbu was followed by many of the younger people who were seated towards the back of the church and up on the balcony, starting to speak in tongues and breaking into another Pentecostal song. The service then ended more formally as the choir trooped out of the church accompanied by organ music.

Later that day Mrs Bassey and I were invited to the manse by the minister and I learnt more about the influence the Pentecostal movement was having within the PCN. Mrs Bassey was friendly with the minister and his wife, the Reverend and Mrs Ukeagbu, and was clearly enthusiastic about the changes the minister had introduced at Duke Town since his induction in 1990. Mrs Bassey said she considered that the minister had 'brought a revival' to the parish, because before he arrived attendance at Duke Town Church was low and the statistical records kept each week showed that attendance rates had doubled since 1990. New, younger people had been brought into the congregation and the noisy, crowded church that I had seen that morning was completely transformed from the quiet and sparse congregation reported for the 1980s. Mrs Bassey said she had found Duke Town to be 'getting more snobby' in the 1980s because Efik families at the church were not welcoming to Ibibio or Igbo people. New migrants, she

¹⁰ This contrasted with the use of English at many Pentecostal ministries.

thought, had been dissuaded from going to Duke Town Church by this elitism, even if they had previously been part of a Presbyterian congregation in their home village. Reverend Ukeagbu had achieved the 'revival', she maintained, because he had 'raised the spiritual life of the church', through introducing the songs, dances and 'powerful prayers' that were so popular within the Pentecostal ministries. The new services were popular she said, not just with the younger people who were now coming to the church in greater numbers again, but also with middle-aged followers such as herself who had also started going to pentecostal services at the new ministries that had opened in Calabar since 1981.

Both Reverend Ukeagbu and Mrs Bassey said that the Duke Town Church congregation had been dominated throughout the 1980s by 'traditional Presbyterians', people who described themselves as Christians but who rarely went to church and often still belonged to indigenous secret societies and participated in traditional ceremonies. Reverend Ukeagbu told us that ministers and elders at the PCN headquarters had sent him to Duke Town because in the late 1980s there had been concern within the organisation about the decline in attendance at PCN churches in Calabar¹¹. Many people in the city were registered as members and had been baptised into the church but rarely attended and so each Sunday the pews were empty and the income from collections was small. Reverend Ukeagbu said he had been chosen by the PCN to go to Calabar following his success at introducing Pentecostal worship¹² and expanding the congregation at St Stephen's parish, Aba, which had become the largest parish congregation in the PCN by 1990¹³. The expansion of the membership in Aba contrasted sharply with the empty pews in Duke Town Church, which, he said, was

¹¹ At the same time, the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star and the new Pentecostal churches that had started in the 1980s were gaining more participants, from the middle aged and younger Presbyterians, like Mrs Bassey, the migrants who settled in Calabar since the late 1970s.

¹² He was brought up within a Pentecostal ministry and had been a pastor before he trained for the Presbyterian ministry at Trinity College, Umuahia.

¹³ 1994 General Assembly report recorded that the eastern synod, of which Aba is the administrative centre, has the highest membership of the whole of the PCN.

widely considered by people at the PCN headquarters to be the most 'traditional' of all the Calabar parishes. By 'traditional' Reverend Ukeagbu said that he referred to both conservation of European 'traditions and beliefs' in the Calabar PCN since the days of the Scottish mission as well as the 'toleration' of indigenous Efik traditional practice by Presbyterian members. The 'old' 'orthodox' services common at Duke Town Church introduced by the Scottish Presbyterian Church have been replaced by Reverend Ukeagbu with a service that he and Mrs Bassey agreed was 'more African' and 'dynamic' than 'that dull, cool thing that we inherited' from the mission. Reverend Ukeagbu also introduced new financial practices to Duke Town Church.¹⁴ When the PCN became separate from the mission, the church had relied upon property and landed assets they inherited, collecting the small '*kobo-kobo*' (penny penny) donations given at the Sunday services and holding jumble sales, which raised little money as goods were often haggled down to low prices¹⁵. In 1990 the PCN accepted tithing to regenerate parish funds. Tithing had first become popular within the Pentecostal ministries, in which each member was asked to donate ten per cent of their income to the church. Substantial funds were raised by the tithing system, and by 1993-4 there were plans to invest the money in a new national PCN headquarters in the Federal Capital, Abuja, a project opposed by some Presbyterians in Calabar.

Reverend Ukeagbu considered that the emphasis placed by the 'traditionalists' in the Calabar PCN upon the historical importance of the city as a regional centre for the PCN was at the expense of national church structures¹⁶. In the 1990s the eastern synod argued that the new house proposed for the Moderator should be built in Aba rather than in Calabar,

¹⁴The financial success of the Pentecostal ministries highlighted the PCN problem with fund-raising. During the mission period the parishes received their income from the Scottish Mission Council in Calabar and were not financially independent.

¹⁵In the Biafran War 1967-70 the property of the church was destroyed by bombing and the schools that remained were taken over by the State in the 1970s.

¹⁶Some Calabar Presbyterians had objected when the main offices of the PCN were re-located from Calabar to Aba in 1978, and the Treasury remained in Calabar as a compromise.

while many Calabar Presbyterians wanted the house to be located in Calabar as the city was the 'historic home' of Presbyterianism in Nigeria. The debate over the relocation of the PCN headquarters was part of a dispute between traditional and born-again Presbyterians over the 'modernisation' of the PCN and the extent to which the early history of the mission should inform the present organisation of the PCN. Pentecostals within the denomination perceived the modernisation programme to be impeded by those members of the church who continued to participate in 'traditional secret societies' which they considered compatible with being church elders. As I show below, the history of affiliation between the PCN and the elite sections of the Efik ethnic group informed the way migrants and indigenes perceived membership of the congregations in Calabar¹⁷.

Reverend Ukeagbu's aims to 'modernise' the proceedings at Duke Town Church provoked opposition from a broad group of Presbyterians, referred to as 'traditionalists' by Reverend Ukeagbu and other born again followers within the PCN. The traditionalists shared a concern to conserve modes of worship and church administration introduced by the Scottish missionaries. The 'traditionalists' also shared other characteristics; they tended to be older people, and many were men and women who had been educated by missionaries and who had worked as teachers or administrators in the school system. However, there were broad differences in the way 'traditional' Presbyterians related to the history both of the Scottish mission and the indigenous Efik authorities in Calabar. Some members of the Calabar indigenous elite, the Efik, Qua and Efut people, who had invited the Scottish mission, felt that they had 'inherited' membership of the Presbyterian church, that Presbyterianism was an aspect of a distinctive Efik history and ethnicity. Those 'traditional' Presbyterians who were not

¹⁷The sense that the church in Calabar was an 'ethnic church' divisions had informed the politics within Biafra during the war, when the Calabar people joined the Federal forces. All remembered the fear of the war, and Mrs Ukeagbu argued that Pentecostalism had appeared in 1970s to bind people together, and said 'traditional' Presbyterians were frustrating regional and national unity in the church by demanding too much control over the PCN.

Efik but Igbo or Ibibio had often migrated to Calabar to attend mission schools between the 1930s and 1950s. This latter group, aimed to conserve 'traditional Scottish forms of worship' while at the same time their concern with Scottish 'traditional' services was tempered by the fact that they associated the Presbyterian Church with the provision of a 'modern' education. 'Traditional' Presbyterians were a small group within the PCN, greatly outnumbered by the Pentecostals who were usually recent migrants to Calabar from Igbo and Ibibio areas. However, the traditionalists were also a vocal group because many were holders of prominent church offices. Some were elders while others were members of the Women's Guild and ran the parish session. I first examine how some 'traditional' Presbyterians who were also participants within the 'traditional' structures of indigenous government in Calabar, argued that Presbyterianism was an aspect of Efik history and contemporary culture.

Traditional Presbyterians: 'We, the Efiks, brought Presbyterianism to Nigeria, then we took Presbyterianism to Aba'

Many Efik Presbyterians who defined themselves as traditional Presbyterians considered their affiliation to the church to be an integral part of their self-representation of Efik ethnicity. The above quotation, from the Efik historian Professor Aye, indicates the Efik sense of ownership of the church, and how this structured their relations to neighbouring Igbo and Ibibio people¹⁸. The way that traditional Presbyterians interpreted the significance of their membership within the PCN was clearly informed by other principles of identification, particularly ethnicity, which showed that religious affiliation was not an 'uncontaminated' social identity in its own right, somehow isolated and 'above' other categories or identities (Jenkins 1997:121). Instead the issues informed wider debates in Calabar about the

¹⁸ Aba is a town in Imo State.

definition of cultural differences between the Efik and the neighbouring Ibibio and Igbo people. The religious politics within the PCN in response to the incursion by the Pentecostal movement was structured by the politics of definitions of ethnic difference. Here I show how 'traditional' Efik Presbyterians incorporated key concerns about the construction and representation of Efik ethnicity in their debates about Pentecostalism in the PCN; especially as regards the history of Efik settlement in Calabar, the mission interpretations of Efik cosmology, chieftaincy titles and 'traditional' secret societies. 'Traditional' Presbyterian Efiks, such as Professor Aye, argued that PCN was 'part of Efik culture and history' and existed alongside other Efik 'cultural traditions' like *ekpe* membership, while many migrant and younger indigenous Pentecostals within the PCN were claiming that Efik 'traditional practices' were not compatible with church membership, and practitioners should be excluded from the church. I ask why the modernisation of the Presbyterian Church in Calabar had become such an important part of discussions about Efik ethnicity in the 1990s. I argue that in Calabar in the 1990s, the debates that surrounded the definition of religious identities were part of the social construction of definitions of ethnic affiliation.¹⁹

Many of the Efik historians drew upon early missionary interpretations of the Efik language and Efik religious practices to substantiate their accounts of a distinct Efik origin in Palestine. The Ibibio historian Dr Noah and his Efik counterparts Professor Aye and *Etubom* Akak debated how closely the Efik were related to the neighbouring ethnic groups of the Ibibio and the Igbo. Professor Aye²⁰, a lecturer in the history department at the University

¹⁹ Throughout the 1970s Efik people in Calabar mounted lavish public displays at the coronations of paramount rulers, the marriages and funerals of prominent indigenes. 'Traditional' religious practices discouraged by the mission, such as libation, became a common part of public ceremonies. Policies of state creation and the allocation of oil revenues provided the impetus for the accentuation of ethnic differences by the Efik. The politics of 'cultural heritage' and the oil economy that informed the way definitions of ethnicity were pursued in Calabar were presented in chapter two.

²⁰ He was from an Efik family in Creek Town, and had gone to school at Hope Waddell and was sent on a mission scholarship to study history at university in Britain. He stayed within the PCN throughout this period, and had been an elder for many years.

of Calabar, and *Etubom Akak*, a member of the *Obong*'s Council, argued that the Efik people, including Qua and Efut, were a discrete ethnic group that had migrated to Calabar from the Middle East. During their migration, the Efik had lived among the Ibibio and Igbo, and had adopted some aspects of their hosts' culture, but they were none-the-less distinct from the Igbo and Ibibio²¹. Efik historians drew upon missionary accounts of the similarity between Efik social and religious practices and Old Testament rituals, and between the Efik and Hebrew languages²². However, many Ibibio people contended that the cultural differences between Efik and Ibibio only emerged recently. Dr Noah argued that the Efik were a sub-group of the Ibibio whose ethnic distinction had only emerged when the Efik moved to the coastal region and secured a monopoly in the trade of slaves and palm oil with the Europeans (Noah 1979). The Efik 'ownership' of the Presbyterian mission was not based upon ancient ties to Old Testament ritual practices, but was a further aspect of this recent monopoly of European interaction. For around sixty years the Efik did not permit the missionaries to move into the hinterland populated by the Ibibio and the Igbo, which denied people inland an education. When mission schools were extended to inland areas during the colonial period Efik cultural hegemony was further extended in the Cross River region as people inland first became literate in Efik, the language that the missionaries had used to translate the Bible²³.

Professor Aye argued that, because the 'Efik people took Presbyterianism to Aba', Calabar should remain the headquarters of the PCN, despite the

²¹Aye dates the Efik sojourn in the Igbo and Ibibio areas as dating from 1150 when the Efik moved to Uruan. Creek Town was the first Efik settlement in Calabar, occurring during the fifteenth century.

²²Missionaries throughout West Africa drew parallels between the indigenous societies and the societies described in the Old Testament. Some Igbo people in Calabar made the same claims. However, the issue was not presented as a key aspect of Igbo ethnicity, whereas in Calabar the debate about the Palestinian origin of the Efiks was the subject of many publications and public debates, although not accepted by all the members of the Efik houses.

²³Mrs Helen Ukpabio said that when she found that Olumba Obu, the leader of the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star, did not speak English but did speak Efik she surmised that this was because the Bible had been translated into Efik.

fact that the Igbos had since become the majority in the Church. 'Traditional' Efiks argued that the Presbyterianism found in Duke Town Church before Reverend Ukeagbu's 'modernisation' programme should be considered both 'original' and 'unique' to Calabar. Calabar Presbyterianism was not being defended as a 'pure' form of Christianity, for that was what the Pentecostal movement claimed to offer, but rather as an original product of the mixing of Scottish Christianity and Efik cosmology. 'Traditional' Presbyterians argued that in the process of translation of the language and the project of conversion, the Scottish mission had sought to establish points of similarity between Efik cosmology and ritual and Christian belief and practice. Mission activity involved an active search for such correspondences (Stewart and Shaw 1993:16). The act of translation was also argued by many 'traditional' Presbyterians, such as Professor Aye²⁴, to indicate that the missionaries perceived Efik cosmology as having an equivalence with certain beliefs in Christianity because the Efik word *abasi* had been used to translate the English word 'God'. This perspective was also shared by several ordained Presbyterians, including the Reverend Ogarekpe,²⁵ who argued that by allowing *abasi* to remain the missionaries had accepted the indigenous cosmology as a pre-Christian form of worship that was not inherently evil, but rather unelaborated. The missionaries also recorded that the similarities that they perceived between Efik ritual and Old Testament worship²⁶. Indigenous Efik cosmology, Reverend Ogarekpe argued, contained many parallels with Christian practices, such as the symbolism of the tree and the symbolism of the cross being good examples, for 'both tell the people of the presence of God'.

²⁴As well as *Etubom* Ukorebi Ukorebi who was discussed in chapter six.

²⁵Reverend Ogarekpe was the minister at Akim Qua and Big Qua between 1993-5. He had held high-ranking posts, Clerk of Synod 1978, but was semi-retired. As a young man he worked in the palm oil plantation on the outskirts of Calabar. He was not ordained but was the choirmaster. Session where Reverend Ude was stationed. He then went to Trinity College for theological training and was ordained, with the encouragement of Reverend Ude.

²⁶Such as the *ndok* ceremony that was revived at the 1994 Calabar Festival, mainly through recreating the accounts that were recorded by the missionaries who witnessed the last *ndok* ceremonies in the 1840s.

These equivalences did not exist outside the interpretations that they are accorded. Many Pentecostalist articulated their opposition to *ekpe* and *Obongship* in terms of doctrine, because of the rites they said were performed during the ceremonies such as libation²⁷. However, while traditional Presbyterians acknowledged certain syncretic equivalences set out by the mission, such as Efik concept of the supreme being *abasi* and aspects of funeral rites, Reverend Ogarekpe rejected the Pentecostal assertion that libation shared any significant similarities with the crucifixion. Reverend Ogarekpe emphasised that many contemporary Pentecostals misinterpreted certain ceremonies as 'sacrifices', ignoring the wider social purposes of ritual slaughter. For example, he said, the killing of a goat at the end of a girl's seclusion in the 'fattening house', could not be reduced to a simple 'sacrifice', rather it was a gift that marked and blessed the start of married life.

Such debates about the historical remnants found by the mission were deemed either out-dated or irrelevant by Pentecostalist in the PCN. The mission history was not disputed, rather what was disputed was the contemporary relevance of these issues. Pentecostals were concerned that such out-dated concerns still informed the contemporary relations between the PCN and that indigenous institutions such as the *Obongship* and the *ekpe* society. The presence of the *ekpe* society at the Presbyterian Church provoked the greatest outcry from born again members in the PCN. Many 'traditional' Presbyterians were church elders and also initiates of the *ekpe* society. Indeed, holding both offices had long been regarded as an indication of high status in Efik society. Both offices were considered compatible by 'traditionalists' in the PCN who pointed to the history of pragmatic co-operation between the *ekpe* society and the mission. Professor Aye argued that because the establishment of the Scottish mission in

²⁷ Pentecostals argued that no sacrifice was to be performed, as the crucifixion of Jesus already was the ultimate sacrifice, and condemned the many 'traditional sacrifices to demons' such as the pouring of libation and the slaughter of cows and goats.

Calabar was the outcome of co-operation between the mission and the Efik 'government', the present day PCN should continue to be tolerant of elders belonging to the *ekpe* society. He pointed out that the Efik traders first invited the mission to Calabar, and that the first Christian services were held in the compounds of wealthy Efik traders and the *ekpe* shrine. The work of the early mission was made possible by the protection of the then 'government of Calabar', the *ekpe* society. The *ekpe* society made laws and the *ekpe* masqueraders (*idem ekpe*) were sent out onto the streets to ensure that people obeyed *ekpe* law. Acknowledging the *ekpe* society gave the mission an authority which the missionaries used to summon people to attend church. In short without the *ekpe* society there would have been no Christianity in Calabar in 1846.

Reverend Ogarekpe argued that the Pentecostal opposition to *ekpe* 'sacrifice' overlooked the assistance that the secret society gave to the mission and the role that the society played in 'governing' wider Efik society. His father had been a high-ranking title holder in the *ekpe* society and, while he had enjoyed the fees that he gained in that position, was also responsible for regulating the planting and harvest seasons, for enforcing rest periods, imposing sanctions on anti-social actions and penalties upon people who failed to comply. If a man had an untidy compound, the *ekpe* society would ask him to tidy it up and if he refused the request he would be barred from the market. If the offender persisted, the man would have to give a goat to the society, which usually a shared burden requiring the assistance of his extended family, and then family members would be prompted to counsel the son and advise him not to behave badly again. If the son did not obey, the ultimate sanction of the *ekpe* society was to sell people to the European slave traders. In the past all indigenous men had belonged to the society and it had an important social function. The *ekpe* was more than the 'superstitious belief' condemned by the Pentecostals, it was primarily 'a social system' that assisted members with family ceremonies such as funeral obsequies and marriages. The mission had not

wanted to ban the society and remove the social support that it provided to members' families²⁸. Reverend Ogarekpe argued that the Pentecostals over-emphasised the powers and secrecy of the *ekpe* society and ignored the social values that the *ekpe* society promoted²⁹. The poor state of the city in the 1990s indicated to him that the present Sanitation Day³⁰ imposed by the State Administration had proven to be no better at cleansing the city than the sanctions of the *ekpe* society. The cultural markers of Efik ethnicity, such as chieftaincy and *ekpe* titles³¹ or membership of the *Obong's* Council, or the Qua or Efut councils, were common among elders in the PCN.

The extent to which many members of the *ekpe* society considered themselves to be a part of the PCN was illustrated by the way that many Presbyterian elders were awarded the honorary chieftaincy titles, such as Chief Mrs Arikpo³² who was awarded the title of *Adaiadha ke Eburutu* by *Edidem* Essien Ekpe Oku V³³ for her missionary work with the Women's Guild in the Cross River region. Mrs Arikpo told me that during what she had termed her 'Mary Slessor time' in the 1940s, she had travelled with other members of the Women's Guild upriver in canoes to evangelise among the Ibibio and Igbo villagers who lived on either side of the Cross River. She met with fierce opposition from non-Christians and had to be

²⁸ Pentecostals also opposed the secrecy and exclusivity of the *ekpe* society. However, Reverend Ogarekpe argued that the secret of the *ekpe* society had been widely known since the 1940s, when it was revealed to all women and non-initiates in churches. The brutality of the punishments meted out by the *ekpe* society went too far, but outside this the society was not as secret as people think, and he contrasted the openness of the *ekpe* society with the continued secrecy of the masons.

²⁹ Reverend Ogarekpe dismissed the Pentecostals as inexperienced in dealing with traditional practices and the conversion process. He said that the church incorporated some traditional ceremonies because experience had taught them that insisted upon people being married in a traditional ceremony before they were married in the church, otherwise the family would come and argue with the ministers and say that they did not agree with it.

³⁰ One day each month, when it was obligatory to stay at home and clean the house and compound.

³¹ However, some elders who were also in the *ekpe* society had started to respond to Pentecostal opposition by refusing to discuss the issue.

³² Elder Chief Mrs Arikpo was a member of the Women's Guild in the 1950s. The Women's Guild started in Arochukwu and Ohaffia area and moved down to Calabar. Mrs Arikpo was National President 1965-70 and 1975-82.

³³ Edidem Essien Ekpe Oku V was *Obong* between 1975-1980.

rescued from the side of the riverbank by some other Efik missionaries after she encountered a very hostile group of women who 'removed her from their village'. The Presbyterian mission had become identified by many Efiks as a particularly Efik endeavour to evangelise the inland peoples³⁴. Many 'traditional' Presbyterians, such as Professor Aye and *Etubom Eyo Honesty II*, concluded that the Scottish mission had 'converted' the Efik to such an extent that many 'traditional' indigenous ceremonies and offices had assumed a legitimate part of the denomination. Professor Aye cited the example of the 'Westminster' coronation of the Efik *Obong*, held at Duke Town Church since 1878 at which the Efik *Obong* was required to swear a Christian oath which complemented the 'traditional' ceremony held at the *Efe Asabo* shrine on the waterside. In order to become an Efik *Obong* it was necessary to swear a Christian oath³⁵.

The extent to which 'traditional' Presbyterianism contributed to social constructions of Efik ethnicity was illustrated by the response of some Efik chiefs to the changes introduced to the Presbyterian Church in Calabar by the Pentecostal Igbo ministers Reverend Ukeagbu and Reverend Onoh. Some Efik people, such as *Etubom Eyo Honesty II* and Chief Cobham, considered that the Presbyterian Church 'belonged' to Calabar and was the particular concern of Efik people, even those who did not regularly attend church themselves. The *Etubom* of Eyo Honesty II House in Creek Town, Calabar, responded to questions from Pentecostals as to why he did not attend more regularly and yet still called himself a Christian by saying that although he rarely went to church and was not an elder, he considered he was a 'strong Presbyterian'. He was a 'strong Presbyterian' because he had been baptised into the PCN, and stayed a member 'due to ties to family

³⁴ Mary Slessor was being presented as a 'living spirit' within the PCN, at the opening of the hostel in March 1994.

³⁵ Duke Town Church is still the site for the coronation of the *Obong* and is called the *Akwa Ufok* (the big house) by Presbyterians throughout Nigeria. The *Obong* is crowned there even if he is not a Presbyterian, for it is the church that is associated with the ceremony, not the religion of the king. Most *Obongs* in Calabar are Presbyterians due to a family history of membership.

traditions'. His grandfather was Eyo Honesty III, who was the first Efik person to convert to Christianity in Calabar, having been baptised in 1853³⁶. The *etubom* was a member of the *ekpe* society and considered that his membership of the secret society had 'no contradictions with the church...because *ekpe* says that God is first and *ekpe* is second. God gives law and *ekpe* puts law into action...and as was said during the libation made at *ekpe* ceremonies, 'abasi [god] don't die, *ekpe* don't die.' For Pentecostals in the PCN, the interpretation of the libation prayer by the *etubom* summed up the syncretism of the 'traditional' Presbyterians who insisted that the beliefs and practices of the indigenous cosmology and Christianity could exist side by side. They also pointed out that the similarities between Efik cosmology and Christianity had been cited by the *Etubom's* great-grandfather, Chief Eyo Honesty II, as the very reason why it was not necessary for him to convert to Christianity.

For Chief Cobham resistance to the introduction of Pentecostal worship at Duke Town was more to do with the claims of Efik ethnicity in the church, than any disagreement with Pentecostal doctrine. Chief Cobham, one of the more vocal critics of the born-again presence at Duke Town Church, was the grandson of Ekpenyoung James Eyamba VI, and great grandson of Eyamba V, a signatory on the invitation sent to Liverpool in 1834 to which the USC mission responded. The Chief thought that the Duke Town Church had changed since Reverend Ukeagbu became minister in 1990³⁷. The church had started to gain a larger congregation that was donating large amounts of money each week, hundreds of people were flocking to the church and to hand over their money. Chief Cobham said that he was angered by this change because, although his family had helped the Presbyterian mission become established in Calabar, his relatives had never received any financial recompense, educational scholarships and had not even gained the knowledge about new methods of agricultural production

³⁶This story is contained in missionary accounts of Calabar. He was the first of the Efik elite to convert.

³⁷ Interview with Chief Cobham 21st October 1994, 25th January 1995.

that they had requested from the mission in their letter of 1834. However, he added that the Eyamba family had not complained about this disappointment in the past because they had accepted that the mission was a charitable organisation that was not 'money-minded' and which deserved their financial support. The missionaries were content to subsist upon a meagre salary financed by donations sent from congregations in Scotland and 'did not set out to make money or to live in luxury'.

The Eyamba family continued to support the mission throughout the time it was based in Calabar, Chief Cobham argued, even though they were bitterly disappointed. Family owned land and labour was donated for the construction of Duke Town Church on Eyamba Street in 1854 and further land was later donated by Ekpenyoung James Eyamba VI for the construction of a mission house on the corner of Ross Street near Duke Town School. Chief Cobham claimed that his ancestors had 'embraced Christianity in the true sense', for although they rarely went to church they had donated considerable amounts of their land and money to the mission. In 1995 Chief Cobham's own economic position was modest, but secure. He lived in a small house in Duke Town and had a steady income from the rent from family properties that he had inherited. However, Chief Cobham said that he had become angry and resentful when he thought that the church at Duke Town was being organised 'as a business' by the new born-again minister, Reverend Ukeagbu. Given that the church was making a profit, Chief Cobham decided that he was entitled to claim compensation and back rent for the land that had been donated to the church by Eyamba V and Ekpenyoung James Eyamba VI. Chief Cobham argued that the PCN had been transformed so much by the born-again movement that it was severed from its historical links with Efik traditional authority in Calabar. The headquarters of the church was now in Aba, and further changes were being planned with the move to Abuja. He pointed out that the income being generated by the new born-again ministers within the PCN was dependent upon the land donated to the mission by his family. The new

income was going straight out of Calabar 'to fill the pockets' of people in Aba and, subsequently, in Abuja. The Efik Presbyterians in Calabar had, he concluded, 'sold their birthright to the Igbos' who 'have nothing to do with the PCN'. Chief Cobham had sent a claim to the PCN headquarters for the payment of ninety-nine years back rent due for the land that his family had donated to the mission³⁸.

The court case was costing the PCN headquarters in Aba a significant amount of money, and the PCN had appointed Reverend Inya Ude, an Igbo minister living in Calabar, to organise the defence of the church against Chief Cobham's claims. Reverend Ude also considered himself to be a 'traditional' Presbyterian, but in a different way from the Efik people who were concerned with the way the mission informed Efik history and ethnicity. As an Igbo migrant to Calabar Reverend Ude represented a different aspect of Presbyterianism 'traditionalism' to that of the Efik chiefs. Reverend Ude was concerned with the conservation of those practices of worship introduced by the Scottish mission which he termed 'traditional' Presbyterian practices³⁹. The 'traditions' that the educated migrants like Reverend Ude wanted to maintain were not those that augmented Efik history, but rather those forms of worship and social organisation introduced by the Scottish mission. Reverend Ude's concern with mission 'tradition' was also tempered by the ethos of modernity that the mission schools had exuded in the 1930s-1940s.⁴⁰ Reverend Ude was one of the many Ibibio and Igbo children from the hinterland who migrated to Calabar to attend school and became the 'mission boys and girls' so often treated with condescension by Efik indigenes who considered

³⁸ Chief Cobham had calculated that the PCN owed his family 534,600 naira in back rent.

³⁹ To Pentecostals the Scottish Presbyterians had practised syncretism by default, because they did not tackle the problems of syncretism and did not introduce the Holy Spirit.

⁴⁰ Several Efik indigenes were also part of the educated, such as *Etubom* Ukorebi Ukorebi Asuquo, however, many Efiks did not consider education to be a necessary part of their social status in Calabar and were less likely to go into teaching or higher education than Ibibio and Igbo people who had settled in Calabar in order to go to school.

themselves to be the 'owners of the mission'⁴¹. As adults many mission educated migrants sought to uphold 'Presbyterian traditions' in the school, but they also emphasised that their secondary education had made them into 'modern' people. The physical distance traversed by the migrant and their subsequent education instilled a greater sense of social transformation than that experienced by the people already living in Calabar and who had long been participants in trade with Europeans.

Reverend Inya Ude first came to Calabar as a pupil at HWTI when he was just seven years old and his journey from Unwana in the Afikpo area to Calabar with his father, which lasted three days by canoe, remained a vivid memory. His father was a Presbyterian evangelist who had worked with the Scottish missionary T.C. Chapman, and when Inya finished primary school in the village his father decided that he should follow his four sisters to school in Calabar. The sisters were at Edgerley, the mission girl's school, but Reverend Ude's father wanted his son to go to the Hope Waddell Training Institute (HWTI)⁴². His paternal uncles in the village refused to support his education as they wanted him to work on the family land, but his father was insistent and took it upon himself to pay all the costs. When they reached the school, Reverend MacGregor, the headmaster, said he was too young to board. His father could find no lodgings in town that would take him in, so in desperation he threatened to leave his son at the school. MacGregor then relented and decided to waive the school fees because his father was an evangelist. Reverend Ude said that the journey to Calabar and his father's determination that he should be educated at the best school had changed the course of his life. The following year his father died and

⁴¹The mission had started primary schools throughout the hinterland by the 1920s, however secondary education was only available in Calabar at the Edgerley School for Girls, Creek Town School, Duke Town School or the Hope Waddell Training Institute (HWTI).

⁴²The Hope Waddell Training Institute was founded in 1895 by the United Presbyterian Church mission as an 'industrial school' to provide training in crafts such as brick-making, printing, carpentry and baking. When the region became part of the Oil Rivers Protectorate in 1891, Calabar was made the administrative headquarters of southern Nigeria the British administration sought educated clerks to join the colonial civil service and asked the mission to expand HWTI to include primary, secondary and a Teacher's Training College.

Reverend Ude said none of his other relatives would have 'made so many sacrifices for him' and he would never have been educated⁴³.

'Mission children' and indigenous Efiks saw the mission from different perspectives. For mission children the mission did introduce modernity, but for many indigenes the mission failed to introduce the new agricultural methods and technical knowledge that the hosts had requested in their letter of invitation. Chief Cobham's grievance that the church had not provided financial recompense for the hospitality and assistance given by his family indicated that he now considered his family to be involved in an exchange with the mission that implied obligation on both parties. Many migrants pursued education not only for practical purposes, but also as part of the process of gaining Christian knowledge and 'spiritual gifts'. Reverend Ude explained his opposition to the Pentecostal movement in terms of the education had he had received from the mission. He thought that Pentecostalist teaching did not encourage the 'depth of preparation and education' that was involved in training for the ministry in the Presbyterian Church. Reverend Ude considered that the long education that he had received at HWTI had been part of his conversion, the gaining of the wisdom that he defined as one of the 'higher spiritual gifts'⁴⁴. Instead, the 'spiritual gifts' taught by the Pentecostal churches were the 'lesser spiritual gifts', such as speaking in tongues, or 'prophecy', that were almost immediately accessible to the new churchgoer and required little preparation. He considered that the social distance he achieved from his village, through his own lengthy transformation into an educated, modern scholar, contrasted sharply with the way that new converts were immediately absorbed into the Pentecostal movement and often credited with spiritual gifts. As he put it, 'why should he, Reverend Ude, speak in tongues when anyone in his village could do so?'

⁴³In the 1940s, Reverend Ude's name was put forward for a scholarship to study abroad, but he was not selected and decided to be ordained an elder and teach at HWTI.

⁴⁴ Reverend Ude was referring to the list of spiritual gifts given in Corinthians 1:12.

The spread of Pentecostalism in the PCN, Reverend Ude argued, corresponded to a decline in educational standards, a point he illustrated by contrasting the careers of two Presbyterian ministers, Reverend Ukeagbu, the Pentecostal minister at Duke Town Church, and Reverend Ogarekpe, the 'traditional' minister at Akim Qua Church, Calabar. The 'New Life for all' programme started by Reverend Ukeagbu that introduced Pentecostalism into the PCN was not based upon a 'proper' Presbyterian background and threatened to 'twist' the church. Reverend Ukeagbu had not worked his way up through the education and training system of the PCN, but he had worked for the Sudan Interior Mission in northern Nigeria. The PCN had tried to absorb him directly into the church and was ready to send him to work in Liberia when civil war broke out. Instead he was sent to Trinity College, Umuahia, where he received one year's training in the ministry which Reverend Ude considered 'pitifully short'. The educational part of the preparation process was important because it was through study that the 'most valuable' spiritual gifts of wisdom emerged, rather than the 'lower quality' spiritual gifts such as speaking in tongues, which everyone could gain immediately. Reverend Ogarekpe, in contrast, had revealed his talents as a minister over the course of his participation in the church. Reverend Ogarekpe was working on a palm oil plantation and was choirmaster at the church where Ude was pastor. One day a speaker at the church had malaria and Reverend Ogarekpe was asked to speak instead. He turned out to have a gift for preaching and was put forward for ministerial training at Trinity College by church elders and graduated with an M.A⁴⁵. His 'gift' was revealed through taking part in church activities, and had greater value than a 'spiritual gift' that suddenly appeared one day and could be gained immediately by many people.

'Traditional' Presbyterians therefore were a diverse group of people who achieved social solidarity in response to their shared sense of opposition to the Pentecostal movement in the PCN. Many older Efik Presbyterians who

⁴⁵ A study of Cross River State 'traditional religion'.

were members of traditional institutions emphasised the similarities between Efik cosmology and the Christian beliefs and practices introduced by the mission. For some 'traditional' Efik Presbyterians telling the history of the PCN in Calabar was part of the construction of a distinct Efik ethnicity. This representation of the mission church as Efik was reflected in the way that the Efik denounced the Pentecostal practices recently introduced into Duke Town Church as 'foreign' influences 'that came from Aba', at the same time as accepting the Scottish influences as 'traditional'. The new style services at Duke Town Church were considered inauthentic in various ways, because the clapping and drumming were said to be 'copied' from the Pentecostal prayer groups in Aba or the *aladura* churches that originated in western Nigeria. 'Traditional' Presbyterians, such as Chief Cobham, considered that the PCN 'belonged' to Efiks who should approve all changes in the parish, and thought that the new Pentecostals were migrants who were solely concerned with making money quickly in Calabar⁴⁶.

Efik Presbyterians also considered Scottish modes of worship in the PCN to be 'traditions' to be conserved, a view that was shared by the older generations of Igbo and Ibibio people who also considered themselves to be 'traditional' Presbyterians. Presbyterians, like Reverend Ude, who were not Efik, were less likely to resent that fact that the Pentecostal movement emanated from Igboland, and instead opposed Pentecostalism on the doctrinal grounds that it was not 'proper' Christianity. However, the persistence of the Pentecostal critique of the PCN drew the diverse traditionalists together. Both shared the view of Presbyterianism in Calabar based upon a long-established European tradition in which parts of Efik tradition have been intertwined to produce an authentic, ancient and unique Calabar Presbyterianism. As Stewart and Shaw have pointed out;

⁴⁶In the PCN the Pentecostal minister at HWTI had been removed for 'tampering with funds', and the episode indicated the way that the new church organisation and forms of offerings in the PCN were 'just ways to make more money'. Professor Aye was very much a central figure in the Efik establishment and was awarded the chieftaincy title for his work on Efik history at a ceremony at the *Obong's* Palace in 1994.

authenticity and originality do not necessarily depend upon purity, they are claimable as uniqueness and both pure and mixed traditions can be unique. What makes them authentic and valuable is a separate issue, a discursive matter involving power, rhetoric and persuasion. Thus both putatively pure and putatively syncretic traditions can be authentic if people claim that these traditions are unique, and uniquely their historical possession (Stewart and Shaw 1994:7)

Born-again Presbyterians and the Pentecostal movement

The born-again movement has had a significant impact upon religious practices within the mainstream Christian denominations in Africa (Meyer 1994, Van Dijk 1992)⁴⁷. 'Traditional' Presbyterians were a vocal group in the Presbyterian Church in Calabar because many were elders or Women's Guild officials, but they were far outnumbered by the many new members who had joined the PCN since 1990 and who defined themselves as 'born again'. The anti-syncretist critique of the PCN by people within the Pentecostal movement brought a renewed focus upon the definition of the boundaries between Christian and 'traditional' religious practices in the denomination. In this section I first describe the critique of the PCN that was articulated by Pentecostals outside the PCN. I then discuss the social identities of the born again members of the PCN and examine how they positioned themselves in relation to the PCN and the Pentecostal ministries. I focus upon two events that occurred in 1995, the arson attack upon the tree at the HWTI boundary with Spring Road and the dispute over the involvement of the *ekpe* society in the centenary celebrations at HWTI.

The new members of the PCN were mainly younger people under forty, the

⁴⁷Some mainstream churches have split. For example, in 1991 the Ghanaian Evangelical Presbyterian Church divided into two factions, one adopted Pentecostal practices while the other retained the 'old' practices introduced by the mission church (Meyer 1994:49). In explaining the emergence of such Pentecostalist movements, Meyer has focused upon the way that the new born-again churches approach the problem of evil. The popularity of the Pentecostalist churches, Meyer argues, 'relates to people's need to cope with the problem of evil in a practical way' (Meyer 1994:50).

majority being in their teens and twenties. About two-thirds were women and all were literate, nearly all had had a primary school education, as did nearly all the people in the Duke Town congregation. It was the younger age of the Pentecostals that most clearly differentiated them from the 'traditionalists' in the church. Many were migrants who had settled in the city during the 1970s and 1980s. Migrants still went to Calabar from the hinterland to be educated in the 1990s, but in contrast to earlier migrants like Reverend Ude who moved to Calabar to go to mission schools, contemporary migrants were educated in schools run by the State Government which took over all schools in the 1970s. The education system did not therefore draw migrants into the church and so deciding to go to the PCN when they settled in town was one of many possible options. Many migrants who had gone to Presbyterian churches in their home village told me that they had first started going to Pentecostal ministries when they reached Calabar. Some left the Presbyterian Church entirely, while others started to go to both Presbyterian and Pentecostal services, a factor that hastened the introduction of Pentecostal practices into the PCN.

The migrants accentuated links with the Pentecostal ministries and often problematised the way that the Presbyterian parishes in Calabar perpetuated links with traditional Efik institutions. People who migrated to Calabar said that they were first prompted to go to a Pentecostal ministry when they settled in Calabar because they found that the Presbyterian churches in the city were 'snobby' and 'too ethnic' and were 'often run by the (Efik) indigenes'. Younger Efik people who were born again members of the PCN often shared this perspective, considering that the predominance of the traditionalists in the PCN eldership preserved 'old-fashioned' and 'backward' participation in 'cultural traditions' by churchgoers.

Whereas older generations of migrants had considered Calabar a modern city in which they received an education, many new migrants in the 1990s who joined the Presbyterian Church perceived Calabar as a centre of

'tradition' rather than modernity. Even migrants who moved from small villages in the hinterland said that they were afraid of the 'witchcraft' and *ndem* possession that they encountered in Calabar. Both migrants and younger indigenes considered that Calabar was best known in the south-eastern region for the public display of ceremonial surrounding 'traditional offices' such as the *Obongship*, chieftaincy and *ekpe* titles in city since the 1970s. The Presbyterians in Calabar still allowed the church to be used by 'traditional' rulers and the 'demonic powers' in Calabar had increased since the Scottish mission ended and even libation was done in public view at Christian ceremonies. Many migrants to Calabar who were born again said that they considered themselves to be bringing a new Christian faith, 'reviving' and 'saving' the city from demonic attacks with regular and fervent Pentecostal prayer.

The Pentecostal members of the PCN were, of course, greatly influenced by the many Pentecostal ministries in Calabar. Born again Presbyterians often went to Pentecostal services in the new ministries and were well aware of the extent of the anti-syncretist critique articulated by the Pentecostal pastors⁴⁸. The Pentecostals argued that the traditional ceremonies, such as the 1994 Calabar Festival, weakened the 'spiritual power' of the Presbyterian Church members who participated. The mission churches, Pentecostals argued, had not taught the 'real gospel of the Holy Spirit' so the 'orthodox' churches, like the PCN and Methodist church, had blinded people to the powers of the Holy Spirit and ignored the problem of witchcraft. 'Traditional' religious practices, such as libation, had been muted but not actively suppressed by the mission church and so reappeared immediately after the Scottish missionaries left. As Valerie, the young woman at Overcomers Bible Mission who used to be a Presbyterian told me, the 'spiritual problems' really started in the PCN when the European missionaries left, because they 'handed the churches over to unbelievers'

⁴⁸ The Pentecostal discourse was so pervasive in Calabar that those younger Presbyterians who did not attend were well aware of the Pentecostalist critique of the Presbyterian Church.

who 'now brought in little of traditions and mixed it up'. It was widely considered by Pentecostals, she said, that of all the 'orthodox' churches that tolerated traditional religious practices in Calabar, 'the Presbyterians are the worse'.

Many Pentecostals outside the PCN viewed the coronation of the Efik *Obong* in Duke Town Presbyterian Church with dismay. One young Ibibio man who went to Greater Revival Ministry said that the *Obong* should be excluded from the church because he is the 'head of the traditional *ndem* cults...he is not a Christian religious leader but takes an oath of allegiance to protect tradition. These traditions include *ekpe*, idolatry, *ndem*, worship of the dead'. The crowning ceremony involves pouring libation to ancestral spirits and so it's satanic by nature and no church should countenance that'. This man, who had never been to the PCN in Calabar, also thought that the two coronation ceremonies should not both be performed. The 'traditional' coronation performed at the *Efe Asabo* was considered to influence the later coronation at Duke Town Church, and he said 'with some of the things I hear they do before the final coronation, I don't think it's proper. It would seem to me to be an abomination in the sight of God'. Many Pentecostals said that the performance of traditional ceremonies indicated that the Presbyterian Church had 'fallen away from Christianity' and 'therefore they compromise their stand' towards traditionalism.

Valerie, the young Efik woman Pentecostalist from Overcomers Bible Mission, said that Duke Town Church 'was not a Christian church'. Instead it was 'a traditional church...so anything traditional could be done there. God is not there'. Valerie argued that only a complete transformation of the PCN, a decisive rejection of tradition ceremonies such as the coronation, could save the Presbyterian Church. As Valerie put it, 'I don't see why a man (*Obong*) who plunges himself in practices mentioned (previously) should be crowned in a church'. She concluded that the coronation should be excluded from a Christian church and added, that 'the *Obong*'s matters

and those of the true and living church are two parallels that should and will never merge. It's a question of letting light meet with dark, and then, of course, darkness disappears'. While Efik traditionalists in the PCN argued that the coronation signified the conversion of the *Obong* and his entourage, Pentecostals argued the reverse, that Efik tradition had become a part of the Presbyterian Church and the congregation were unaware of the spiritual dangers entailed. As an Ibibio person at Overcomer's Bible Mission told me; 'the crowning of the *Obong* of Calabar is usually accompanied by some rituals which should not be done in the church. But this depends on whether the worshippers in Presbyterian or Duke Town appreciate this fact, as the majority of them are spiritually blinded'.

The anti-syncretism of the Pentecostals had an impact upon born again people within the Presbyterian Church and some, like the *Etubom*'s son, Ukorebi Ukorebi Ita, referred to in the previous chapter, decided to leave completely. Other Presbyterians, who defined themselves as born again and were critical of the 'traditionalists' in the PCN, but did not leave the church completely and concentrated on reforming the denomination. Mrs Bassey, the teacher who first took me to services at Duke Town Church, was such a person. She had been a member of the PCN all her life but wanted more Pentecostal elements in the services and attended more regularly since Reverend Ukeagbu and Reverend Onoh were inducted.

Another younger person who went to Pentecostal ministries but stayed a member of the PCN, was Bassey, a fifteen-year-old girl who went to Henshaw Town Church. When I first met Bassey she was living with her mother and younger siblings in a small rented compound, and one day she greeted me as I walked up the street and we became friendly. She had just arrived back in Calabar from Lagos because her Efik mother had recently divorced her Yoruba father. Bassey told me that her mother had paternal ties to an Efik royal family, so Bassey had cousins who were Efik 'princes

and princesses'. However, because her father was Yoruba, she knew that she did not stand to inherit royal titles herself, and that financial assistance from the family was more likely to emerge from their maternal relatives⁴⁹. Bassey was a keen student and when I met her she was in her last year of secondary school at Edgerley Girl's School. She told me that she wanted to go to university to study medicine and took her WAEC examinations in 1994. However during 1994-5 her plans were being frustrated by school strikes, her academic progress had come to a standstill, she was unable to get her WAEC results. During this period she had the time to increase her involvement in church clubs like PYPAN.

When the family first arrived back in Calabar from Lagos in the early 1990s they all went along to Duke Town Church with the mother's Efik paternal relatives who were regular churchgoers there. Bassey told me that this had been her mother's decision and at the age of thirteen Bassey had not had fixed ideas about where she wanted to go to church and just followed her mother there. However, by the time that I met Bassey she was fifteen and had already decided to stop going to Duke Town Church, which her mother and siblings still attended, and had become a member at Henshaw Town Presbyterian Church instead. When I asked her why she had changed from one Presbyterian Church to another, she said that she had found that Duke Town Church was still 'too snobby' and full of 'dubious characters', despite the reforms by Reverend Ukeagbu. Pentecostal modes of worship were also being introduced at Henshaw Town, and she felt that the congregation there was 'more friendly'. At Henshaw Town Church she had also joined the Presbyterian Young Peoples' Association of Nigeria (PYPAN), which was a youth organisation for girls. PYPAN had become a section of the PCN in which Pentecostal practices were common. Bassey said that she liked PYPAN because they 'pray powerfully and speak in tongues' and had a spiritual power that had been revealed when they 'disgraced two witches' who had been in the congregation at the

⁴⁹ Land and titles were inherited patrilineally, other property through maternal ties.

Presbyterian Church at Ediba. Bassey said she agreed with the Pentecostal movement in the PCN, and preferred to be born again within the PCN than attend a Pentecostal ministry because she thought that many Pentecostal ministries were corrupt with money and those that taught the prosperity gospel often made empty promises to their followers to 'get rich quick'. Both Mrs Bassey and Bassey considered that since the arrival of the two Igbo ministers, the PCN did provide spiritual protection against witchcraft, although the activities of the 'traditionalists' continued to 'weaken' the church.

Marking boundaries: The tree on the headland, Old Town, Calabar, January 1995 and the centenary of the Hope Waddell Training Institute, March 1995.

Two incidents occurred in 1995 that illustrate the controversies raised by the Pentecostal critique of the PCN over the boundary between acceptable and unacceptable religious practices. The first was the burning down of a tree on the physical boundary of the HWTI School in January 1995. The second concerned the involvement of the *ekpe* masqueraders who marked the same boundary during the centenary celebrations at HWTI in March 1995. The tree that was burnt in the arson attack was a visual marker of the boundary between mission land and the habitat of 'traditional' *ndem* spirits. The western edge of Calabar is bordered by the Calabar River. The land alongside the river undulates, high cliffs form at Mission Hill, before going down to the valley at the beach in Duke Town, then rising again. From there the land rises to the highest point, the headland at Old Town and the Hope Waddell School. In the middle of January 1995 there was an incident that showed the extent to which the Pentecostalist movement had articulated a climate of open hostility to *ndem* through an explicit challenge to *ndem* territory. On the headland at Old Town was an extremely high tree with huge spreading branches. The tree was a prominent landmark used by

shipping navigating the Calabar River.

There were several stories about where the tree came from. Some people said that the tree had been grown from a seedling that the USC missionaries brought with them from a Presbyterian mission in Jamaica. Most people said that the tree had been planted to mark new boundaries of the Hope Waddell Institute⁵⁰. It was one of four trees that had stood there in the past. The tree was said to mark the 'routes' taken by *Anansa Ndem* when she travelled out of the river and across the city. The city was traversed by many underground rivers and streams and these were said to be 'paths' on the routes taken by *ndem*, and the Old Town tree was the most visible of these. The base of the tree was a site for religious practices associated with *ndem*. I was told by Bishop Ellerbe of the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star church that while the *ndem* cult no longer met in public in the city, throughout the 1970s and early 1980s members of the *ndem* society would gather at the tree. There would be objects left under the tree and hung in the branches, such as animal and human skulls, small earthen pots with water inside, eggs and *ekpin* (palm frond). The public worship of *ndem* no longer occurred but the spirit of the *ndem Anansa* was still associated with the site. It was said that *Anansa Ndem* had caused erosion of the cliff next to the Calcemco cement factory, which had closed down, and several people had been drowned in the waters at the bend of the river.

In February 1995 a man started to burn down the tree. When people living nearby asked him why he was doing that he replied that the tree 'had to be destroyed' as it 'had killed people he knows'. Each day he would carry large tyres and wood to the tree, lay them around the base of the trunk, douse them with petrol, then set it alight and stand back to watch it burn. Several people lived very close to the tree and cultivated small gardens there and were afraid that their property would be destroyed if the tree fell. However, while the neighbours looked on and complained among

⁵⁰In Efik the tree was known as *ekom* (Latin name was *coula edulis*).

themselves, they said they were afraid to confront the man and ask him to stop the burning because the man was 'mad' and if they intervened to save the tree he might accuse them of being in league with the demons that he was trying to destroy.

Each day the neighbours would wait for the man to leave and then put out the fire. One man was prepared to challenge the man and wrote a letter to the Director of Cross River State Environmental Protection Agency stating that the 'landmark tree' was 'now being burnt by a mad man accompanied by religious bigots in the pretext that the tree harbours evil spirits'. The author requested that the Agency 'put up protection for the tree' to prevent its destruction. An ominous closing paragraph was added by the writer. The words were interpreted by several readers as an allusion to spiritual repercussions. At the end of the letter the writer added that, 'it should be noted that the tree serves as a wind break along the coastline and the destruction of it will bring ill winds to houses as well as to human lives in the area'.

After several days had passed, the fires had burnt a large hole on one side of the tree. Eventually the hole in the tree trunk became so large that the city council decided that the tree was unsafe and should be cut down. One day as I was going along the road that led past the tree I saw that there was a large crowd gathering. The men from the council had arrived and were hacking at the base of the tree with a chainsaw. The felling of the tree took a long time but eventually it toppled and crashed across the road. The highest branches fell across the road and smashed down the cliffs into the water. Small children chased the highest branches as they fell, throwing stones at them. When I asked a policeman standing nearby what the children were doing he said that the evil spirits in the tree were at the highest points. Birds that had been seen perching in the high branches were spirits that had taken the form of vultures. He added that the tree contained 'the mother of all witches', who was *Anansa Ndem*. People started hacking

off the tree trunk for firewood and collecting up the sticks that had spread over the whole area. With the felling of the tree the landscape was irrecoverably altered. Indigenes, both traditionalists and Pentecostals, who claimed to have knowledge of *ndem*, said that it was a futile act. However, from the 'outside' it had changed the landscape for good.

When I spoke to traditional chiefs after the event he maintained that the destruction of the tree would not destroy *ndem*. Chief Ekpenyoung stated that the man who burnt the tree must be mad for when the tree was destroyed the *ndem* just go elsewhere, for the tree was only a sign of *ndem*. Reverend Archibong, another indigene, said that the destruction of the tree did not have any impact upon the 'demonic spirits' that the man wanted to destroy. However, despite the fact that the tree was destroyed by a 'mad man' it was the prevailing hostility towards traditional religious practices expressed by the born agains that had enabled the action to go unopposed for so long. This delay meant that the tree eventually had to be felled and its destruction did not generate vocal opposition from the public.

The *ekom* tree marked the boundary between the grounds of HWTI and Spring Road that ran alongside the cliffs overlooking the river. This boundary was to be highlighted again during the centenary festival, when it was marked by the masqueraders of the *ekpe* society in the way that all land that is to be 'protected' by the society is ritually delineated at the start of ceremonies. The HWTI had been built on land owned by the Qua indigenes on the headland overlooking the river. The school grounds were large flat fields, leading up to the edge of the road that led down to the river. Near Spring Road four trees were planted by the mission to indicate the school boundary, and it was one of these trees that was burnt in January 1995. HWTI had been started as an 'industrial school' in 1895 on the suggestion of Mary Slessor. The school was to provide girl and boy students with trade skills to set up in business as bakers, seamstresses, carpenters or builders. However, the school grew in size during the colonial

administration, becoming a boys' boarding school. In the 1970s all schools were taken over by the State Administration and the land and property had been confiscated from the PCN by the State. However, the PCN had not requested compensation for the property as the church aimed to claim it back at a future date.

The centenary celebrations at the Hope Waddell Training Institute held in Calabar in March 1995 highlighted the disunity between traditional and born-again Presbyterians. Both factions had different interpretations of the significance of Presbyterian history in Calabar and the debates informed contemporary disputes over modes of worship, financial organisation and the location of the new headquarters of the PCN. The preparations for the centenary celebrations were co-ordinated by organisers in both Lagos and Calabar. In Lagos there was the National Executive Committee of the Hope Waddell Old Students Association headed by the old-boy Torch Taire and the Hope Waddell Centenary committee headed by Chief Elder A.L. Agbe Davies. In Calabar, the National Centenary Co-ordinating Committee was headed by the Chairman, Engr. Ekpe Ita. The committees had put together plans for a week-long set of events to mark the centenary, including a Press Conference, 'cultural dances' and excursion and had invited a Scottish missionary, Reverend MaCrae to travel from Scotland. On the final day of the celebrations, there was to be a procession in the form of a 'motorcade' and 'carnival train' through the town from Duke Town School on Mission Hill to the Institute. The route traced the place where the mission had first started in 1846. The procession was to be headed by old pupils and teachers of Hope Waddell through the centre of Calabar. A large replica of the ship *Waree*, on which the USC missionaries had first travelled to Calabar in 1846, decorated a float. At the Institute, a centenary service had been planned and a central arena set out adjacent to the school chapel. After the church service, there was to be a 'civic reception' at which there would be 'addresses and goodwill messages from Governments' and the 'planting of the centenary tree' in the presence of the Cross River State military

administrator. The school had expanded to include 'old boys' from throughout Nigeria and West Africa, and the ceremonies were arranged to reflect the cosmopolitan nature of the school. In addition, Presbyterians from throughout Nigeria had been invited by the PCN. Most are from other parts of the east, with a large group from the Aba, including the Moderator of the PCN. The event was to raise money to build a new set of dormitories and classrooms on the far side of the school fields. The Committee would raise the funds, which would also be supplemented by a grant from the Military Government, which ran the school.

However, when the Committees from Lagos arrived and met with the Co-ordinating Committee in Calabar to finalise the arrangements for the procession, a dispute broke out. The conflict highlighted the debates over religious identities within the PCN and the regional identity of the 'traditional' Efik. Some members of the Protocol Sub-Committee within the Calabar Co-ordinating Committee insisted that the traditional masqueraders of the *ekpe* secret society should lead the procession through the town centre. The presence of the *ekpe* was essential, they argued, because it was part of a historically accurate representation of the system of power and authority, the 'government of Calabar' that had existed in town when the missionaries had first arrived. Incorporating such traditional authority illustrated the importance of the traditional authority of the Efik traders in inviting the mission and the importance of the *ekpe* society in enabling the missionaries to work unhindered in Calabar. The involvement of the *ekpe* masqueraders in the centenary procession should be acceptable because the Scottish missionaries had agreed to co-operate with the *ekpe* society in 1846. Examples from the diary of the missionary Anderson which illustrated the close ties between the mission and the Efik elite represented by the *ekpe* society were quoted. Anderson has requested that the *ekpe* bell be rung to call people to attend church for the first time. The missionaries had held services inside the *ekpe* building before the Duke Town Church was constructed (Marwick 1897:215). In short, it was argued

that the Scottish missionaries had been dependent upon the law and order that was maintained by the *ekpe* society. The co-operation meant that the mission had approved the *ekpe* society and that the mission recognised the part played by the *ekpe* society in the expansion of Christianity in Calabar.

Despite vocal protestations from other Presbyterians opposed to the involvement of the *ekpe* masqueraders in the centenary celebrations, the next day the *ekpe* masqueraders led the procession through the streets from Mission Hill to the Institute. Those from outside Calabar were angry that they had to walk through the city with the masqueraders. The masqueraders took up their place at the head of the procession and cleared a path for the procession to pass. When they reached the gates of the Hope Waddell Institute the masqueraders led the way up the drive before dividing away to encircle the boundaries of the school grounds. The procession then reached the central arena and the participants waited for the church service to begin. As the service started, the words of the minister were punctuated by the sound of bells of the *ekpe* masqueraders ringing from the boundaries of the school. The ceremonies then continued after the church service with 'cultural displays' of *abang* dancing, and a performance by the Hope Waddell Institute choir. Speeches were then to be given by the guests seated at the high table. At the table was the organiser of the Lagos Old Boys Association, Torch Taire, the Moderator of the PCN, the Right Reverend Akanu Otu, and Reverend MaCrae, a Scottish Presbyterian missionary who had been the Principal at the school between 1945-52 who was representing the Church of Scotland. Torch Taire and Reverend MaCrae delivered their speeches first before the main address by the moderator. Suddenly, before the Moderator had spoken, the ceremony was abruptly interrupted when the Military Administrator of Cross River State, Lieutenant Agboneni, and his entourage arrived by car. The attention of journalists and the crowds of spectators at the school were immediately drawn away from the Presbyterian ministers on the podium to the Military Governor. Lieutenant Agboneni had been invited by the organisers to plant

at commemorative tree in the school grounds. In the company of the paramount ruler of the Quas, the *Ndidem Usang Iso*, the Military Administrator planted the tree, surrounded by photographers and the cameras of television journalists, while a crowd of onlookers gathered around.

Responses to the PCN disputes

During the days after the centenary celebrations many Pentecostal Presbyterians and onlookers from the Pentecostal ministries started to voice their concern about two main issues. Firstly, people questioned whether the *ekpe* masqueraders should have been permitted by the PCN to participate in the centenary procession, especially to take a prominent place leading the procession. Secondly, several people were resentful and concerned at the way that the speeches by ministers made during the ceremony at Hope Waddell were so abruptly curtailed by the arrival of the Military Governor. Both incidents seemed to emphasise the parameters of the authority of the Presbyterian Church. The boundaries of the PCN were marked both by the presence of the 'traditional' local authority of the *ekpe* society and the representatives of the State administration. Of these two issues, opposition to the presence of the *ekpe* masqueraders was debated explicitly, while the entrance of the State Administrator was discussed in a more circumspect manner.

The controversy surrounding the presence of the *ekpe* masqueraders at the HWTI centenary celebrations further aggravated the debate between the 'traditional' and born again Presbyterians, which I first encountered when talking to Reverend Ukeagbu and Mrs Bassey. In response to the anti-syncretist critique of the Pentecostalist movement that had entered the PCN, both Efik and other 'traditional' Presbyterians defended the role

played by the *ekpe* masqueraders in the centenary. The *ekpe* society was permitted to take part, traditionalists argued, because their presence commemorated the historical importance of the secret society in the establishment of the mission. For many born again Presbyterians from Igbo and Ibibio areas, Efik 'traditionalists' in Calabar perpetuated disunity within the PCN by over emphasising the importance of the Efik as first hosts of the Scottish mission.

The Moderator of the PCN in 1995, the Right Reverend Akanu Otu,⁵¹ was a Pentecostal Presbyterian from Unwana, an Igbo speaking town upriver from Calabar⁵². Reverend Akanu Otu considered that many Efiks were reluctant to integrate into the PCN because they wanted to emphasise their cultural distinctiveness from surrounding ethnic groups and increasingly drew upon their part in mission history to augment their claims. At the 1994 General Assembly there had been a report presented on the disunity that existed in the church and centred around the relations between Calabar and Aba. The Efik demand PCN investment should be in Calabar because the city was the start of the mission was considered by the Moderator to be a continuation of the confinement of the Scottish missionaries in Calabar by the Efiks before the colonial administration. In other parts of Nigeria, Reverend Otu said, the PCN tried to separate 'traditional' religion and the Christian church. Over twenty years ago the Board of Faith and Order put in place the policy that banned church elders from joining the *ekpe* society. The ruling had been ignored in Calabar where members persisted in participating in societies and even insisted that the *ekpe* players should lead the HWTI procession, which to the Moderator seemed contradictory for, in his words, 'how could the masqueraders of the *ekpe* society lead a Christian Church belonging to Jesus Christ'? The Moderator, along with other born again Presbyterians, questioned the congruity of the two identities. Being an *ekpe* member and being a Christian were not compatible he argued, so

⁵¹ Dr Otu was educated at HWTI and worked for Dunlop Rubber plantation (now CREL) before going to Trinity College Umuahia in 1964 and being ordained in 1968.

⁵² Reverend Otu said he had worked to promote the unity of the church since the war.

raising questions about the combination of two offices that had long defined prominent people in Calabar.

Conclusion

The presence of the *ekpe* society and the Military Administrator at the HWTI centenary highlighted the extent to which the PCN encountered both traditional and State authority. Often the Pentecostals within the PCN experienced traditional and State authority as combined, the Moderator told me that the PCN often requested the protection of the State Administration against attacks by secret societies upon Christians. In Afikpo, in Imo State, the PCN had confronted members of 'traditional' secret societies who demanded that non-initiates and women should stay inside their homes or be attacked. In 1994 the cult destroyed several houses and businesses belonging to Christians. The Reverend Otu took the case of intimidation to the Military Administrator of Imo State and an order was promulgated stating that the secret society should not intimidate people, which the government never enforced. The Reverend maintained that local traditionalists were usually able to count upon the tacit support of the Military Administration to escape punishment for attacks made upon Christians who took a stance against traditional societies. The Moderator argued that Presbyterian elders and ministers should refuse to accept any chieftancy titles that they are offered⁵³. Reverend Torty Onoh, the Igbo minister at Duke Town Church, argued that Efik traditionalists, in particular the *Obong* as the Efik monarch, constrained the PCN within a system of political patronage that tended towards episcopalianism. The opinions of the congregation were subordinated to a powerful eldership and monarchy antithetical to the democratic workings of the Holy Spirit⁵⁴.

⁵³ A very different perspective from that of Dr. Francis Ibiam, Akanu Out's uncle, who was a titleholder and a Presbyterian elder.

⁵⁴ Igboland had traditionally a republican government, while Efiks had a monarchy.

Pentecostalism introduced a democracy within the PCN that better reflected the republicanism that was eastern Igbo political culture. The PCN was becoming 'more democratic' with the impact of Pentecostalism. 'Spiritual gifts' were received by all and parishes were voicing demands to select their own ministers rather than accepting the ministers imposed by the PCN administration⁵⁵.

The PCN in Calabar was the site of debates about different forms of religious and ethnic identification and how these forms interacted together. Since the end of the Scottish mission in the 1960s, the PCN had accommodated Scottish forms of worship and church organisation and hosted ceremonies attended by members of the 'traditional' Efik secret societies. The PCN has been considered the 'Efik' church by many Nigerians, patronised by 'traditional' Efik authority and also constitutive of that authority through its part in the coronation of Efik *Obong*. Many elders were also members of the *ekpe* society and several held posts on the *Obong*'s council of *Etuboms*. The congruity of these offices was sharply questioned by the Pentecostal critique of the 'traditional' Presbyterians. The Pentecostal movement in the PCN emphasised the church as a national organisation. In chapter six I described how the Pentecostal evangelist Elizabeth Ecoma stated that her Pentecostalism was 'the African view, the Christian view', a spirituality that addressed concerns about 'spiritual attack' and deliverance. Pentecostals within the PCN disputed that the 'traditional' religious practices that many older Efik Presbyterians wanted to conserve were the only authentic forms of African spirituality. The Pentecostals within the PCN were intent upon reforming the basis of the ties of affiliation to the church, arguing that these ties should be based upon contemporary participation rather than inherited membership through family ties. Pentecostals within the PCN had started to challenge the claim by 'traditional' Presbyterians that they could 'just inherit' their church membership from their parents, and demanded a new

⁵⁵ The church policy of posting ministers to particular parishes has been challenged by Pentecostal PCN congregations that wanted certain ministers to be posted to their parish. At the 1994 General Assembly the issues of posting had assumed sufficient importance for questionnaires to be sent out to parishes asking whether the parish or the General Assembly Board should elect the minister. It was decided General Assembly should continue to select ministers.

emphasis on church attendance as the criteria for membership and receiving baptism.

Prominent 'traditional' Efik Presbyterians highlighted the contemporary authority of the *ekpe* society and the Efik in Calabar. 'Traditionalists' within the PCN sought to define the church in local terms, happy to align the denomination with the authority of the Efik paramount ruler and the Council of *Etuboms*. In contrast, Pentecostals within the PCN wanted to emphasise the PCN as a national church, with a head office in Abuja and with a project to extend PCN churches to the north and west of Nigeria. The Pentecostal ministries looked beyond the boundaries of Nigeria and sought to participate within a global religious movement.

Plate 7.

Reverend Archibong's desk, IBM.

REV. ENG. A. E.
ARCHBONG, JP.
GOD BLESS



OUR DADDY IS
AMBITIONATE
CHARITABLE
HAPPY
LOVED
STYLISH
WIS
DADDY WE LOVE Y
- IBM YOUTHS.



I HAVE A
GOD
(What else never fails)

Chapter Eight 'Raiding the Strongholds'

Introduction

In this chapter I examine how Pentecostals addressed political and economic institutions in the wider society beyond the confines of the ministries. During the 1970s and 1980s Pentecostals in Calabar took very little part in debates about the economy and polity of the city. However, as I show below, starting in 1989 and the early 1990s, members of the newly formed Pentecostal ministries increasingly entered public debates. Pentecostals in Calabar, as elsewhere in Nigeria, associated politics with corruption and represented the political sphere as a 'satanic' realm in which powerful politicians were thought to acquire office through the influence of 'evil spiritual forces'¹.

In recent years Pentecostals in Calabar have directed their attention towards the reform of the 'satanic' realm of politics. Here I examine how the different Pentecostal ministries constituted a religious movement that had established a social space beyond the State domain. I argue that within each ministry, people participated in a collectivity that was defined in contrast to other social and political institutions. The Pentecostal movement as a whole formed a collectivity in contrast to 'traditional' institutions of paramount rulers and their local councils. However, I also explore the way that the Pentecostal movement was cross-cut by debates within and between the different ministries over the cultural meanings that were attached to membership and involvement in the movement. In chapter five I argued that the 'tribalism' and social hierarchy absent from the movement in its official and joint pronouncements (Meyer 1998, Marshall 1991, Hackett 1998) were in fact often evident in social relations between people within particular ministries. In this chapter I detail how such social differences between

¹ As noted elsewhere in Nigeria, Marshall observes that in Lagos the 'centrality of the spiritual realm to popular conceptions of the forces behind events in the spiritual world' (Marshall 1991:34, Van Dijk 1992).

people in the ministries were also cited when people entered into political and economic debates outside the ministry. I show how markers of social difference, such as ethnicity and economic status, were highlighted by Pentecostals to accentuate the differences between ministries in contexts when each claimed to possess distinct and unique qualities in order to recruit members.

Many areas of social life were problematised by participants within the Pentecostal movement: the self, family, and affiliation with broader social groups based upon criteria such as ethnicity, occupation, income and gender. Jelin has argued that social movements provide the context in which to examine relations between, 'individualised, familiar, daily life and socio-political processes writ large, of the State and its institutions' (Jelin (1987) quoted in Escobar 1992:408). Social movements are not only defined by their resistance to the State, they are also shaped by the personal and social concerns of the individuals who join the collectivity. The study of social movements has highlighted the social interrelations between the 'micro-politics of everyday practices and their imbrication with larger processes of development, capital and the State' (Escobar 1992:420). Studies of Pentecostalism have focused upon the two furthest points of the social relations, the way Pentecostalism influences the interaction between the convert and their extended family (Meyer 1998), and the way that Pentecostals have formed a critique of the Federal State (Marshall 1998)². Here I also discuss the way individuals perceive their conversion and I discuss Pentecostal opposition to Federal Government. My main focus, however, is an examination of the widespread Pentecostal critique of the workings of 'traditional' government at city level. I argue that the Pentecostal debate highlights questions about the way that the institutions of local government in Calabar are incorporated within the Nigerian State.

² Marshall has examined the rhetoric of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) on a national scale, in criticism of the corruption in the Federal Government and the opposition to perceived 'Islamisation' of the Nigerian State (1998:309-310).

As I have discussed in previous chapters, many Pentecostals in Calabar were critical of the institutions of Efik, Qua and Efut³ 'traditional' government. The authority of these institutions rested upon the indigenous cosmology, the *ndem efik* that were perceived as the 'strongholds' of traditional government. The institutions based upon the indigenous cosmology were considered by Pentecostals to be both spiritually and materially corrupt. In the 1990s Pentecostals also increasingly articulated a hostility towards the networks of patronage they perceived to exist between members of the indigenous councils and the Federal Government. The paramount rulers and the members of the traditional councils of the Efik, Qua and Efut were thought by many people outside their ranks to 'have an ear' to the Federal Government. The privileged connections were particularly resented after 1993 when the inhabitants of Calabar were disenfranchised after the end of the transition government. Many Pentecostals also disputed the claims of indigenous leaders to be the 'landowners' of the city. The ancestors of the Efik, Efut and Qua indigenes formerly controlled access to all land in the city. Certain residual rights over land remain with the present members of these groups. Such rights, together with the prestige associated with being the descendants of the original inhabitants, were recognised in the description of Efik, Qua and Efut as 'landowners'. However, it was precisely these rights, particularly the ritual and symbolic powers exercised by the *ekpe* society over land boundaries, which were contested by the Pentecostal ministries.

Pentecostals in Calabar appropriated the 'deliverance' and 'prosperity' gospels popular throughout the global Pentecostal network and 'set them to

³The territory of the city is 'owned' by these groups, each with a paramount ruler and council of chiefs as representatives to Federal Government. In return, recognition as a paramount ruler entitled Calabar rulers to a government stipend, access to foreign currency and to travel privileges. With the end of the transition programme, links to Federal Government were highly prized by Calabar inhabitants, both indigenes and all other local inhabitants.

work'⁴ on the spiritual causes of local economic decline and corrupt government. The Reverend Archibong, who was leader of IBM, and Evangelist Mrs Helen Ukpabio, who was the leader of Liberty Gospel Ministry have been described in previous chapters and Mrs Ekpenyoung, the Deputy-Governor of Cross River State during the transition administration who became a member of IBM in 1994, exemplify the shared concerns of Pentecostals. Two events in particular expressed the new public profile and shared meanings of the Pentecostal movement in Calabar. The first was the 'covenant-breaking' tour by Reverend Archibong in 1989. The second event occurred in 1990 when Evangelist Helen Ukpabio at the Liberty Gospel Ministry organised Pentecostal opposition to plans by Olumba Olumba Obu to lead a procession through the town.

'Powers and principalities'

Most Pentecostals shared the view that the 'ancestral covenants' from which they sought 'deliverance' as individuals caused widespread economic damage to the city. The Reverend Archibong, founder of IBM, was an early proponent of the idea. As I described in chapter five, IBM had become known as an 'elitic' church. Reverend Archibong had been born into the Efik elite, as a member of the royal Archibong House and was one of the very few older Efik men to become born-again and start a ministry. Since 1989 Reverend Archibong had argued that the individual participants within the fellowship possessed the collective potential to 'deliver political institutions from satanic possession' and 'revive' the economy in Calabar. Reverend Archibong drew upon the global gospels of 'deliverance' and 'prosperity' to produce a critique of the workings of politics and the economy in Calabar and diagnose the 'spiritual causes' of decline. Reverend

⁴ As Marshall has argued, although Pentecostal gospels that were started in the United States are frequent in Nigeria, the different cultural context in which these gospels are used raises different cultural interpretations and meanings (Marshall 1991).

Archibong was particularly concerned with the economic decline he perceived in Calabar. He argued that Pentecostal revival could reverse the economic decline, because the decline had 'spiritual undertones'. Many Efiks, Efut and Quas, he said, preferred to remain members of the 'orthodox' churches, because these denominations were 'tolerant' and 'turned a blind eye' to the perpetuation of traditional religious practices. The Scottish missionaries had never really understood the practices of the *ekpe* society as a 'pure form of idol worship' and consequently had never fully suppressed them. At the end of the 1960s, when the last mission stations were closed, he argued that the chiefs 'got back to their heathen worship and God turned his back on us'. Calabar was not a prosperous city because 'the people departed from serving God and decided to serve other things, like mammons, like marine spirit and pouring libation, the wrath of God came upon the land - Calabar lost its favour before God and became a cursed land. Things became so difficult. The one time favoured land became a barren land. Having nothing'.

The institutions of traditional government, *ekpe* society and the offices of the paramount rulers and *etuboms*, were founded upon the spiritual authority of the *Ndem Efik*. The *ekpe* society had been the 'government of Calabar' and was regarded 'as the strongest power' until the nineteenth century. Although other tiers of regional and national government were introduced in the colonial and post-colonial eras, the *ekpe* society remained important in Calabar. Initiation into the society was still important for Calabar indigenes: 'still today, if you are an indigene and you are not initiated into the *ekpe* society, you are nought'. The society was considered part of Efik culture and sustained social order, as illustrated by the popular saying that the *ekpe* society was 'the backbone of the Efiks'. In a spiritual sense *ekpe* and *ndem efik* controlled the natural resources in the city and inhabited the environment⁵. Reverend Archibong stated that when he had become born-

⁵ The members of the *ekpe* society also retained some practical influence over land and property. Infringements of an initiate's land could be punished by the society and members would be assisted in land disputes.

again he had refused to take up the 'traditional' titles for which he was eligible. Instead, he had used the indigenous knowledge that he gained when he was initiated to oppose the system as he had 'valuable insight' and understanding into the ways of the 'traditionalists' in Calabar. He also claimed that prosperity, the 'wealth covenant', could follow deliverance from the ancestral covenants. The person who believes and gives money to the ministry will be rewarded 'hundred fold' with material and spiritual riches. Once a person became born-again their material wealth no longer depended upon how hard they worked. Rather prosperity was awarded to people who were 'saved' and donated money to the ministry. As Reverend Archibong put it;

prosperity comes from God, it is not hard work that makes you who you are. If it is because you work so hard then the people to be rich should have been the labourers because they work harder than the rich people. I stay in an air-conditioned office, I don't work now – and as a civil engineer I did not work much. But I would make money. There are people working on this road outside who dig the ground, who carry the cement, who mix the mortar and they are still poor. So it does not depend on hard work, it is by the grace of God. If God gives you that grace you have it the - the Bible says the silver and the gold belongs to God so it is God who can bring prosperity not man.

He argued that prosperity could only reach Calabar after the city had been 'delivered' from 'ancestral covenants'⁶. He claimed that until the start of the Pentecostal movement in Calabar churches had neither understood these ancestral covenants nor succeeded in breaking them. In August 1989 he organised a public event to break covenants in the city centre. The event was recalled by many Pentecostals as marking the start of interventions by Pentecostals in wider political and economic debates. Reverend Archibong led his followers and other pastors and Pentecostals in a

⁶ Reverend Archibong referred to prosperity preachers from the United States and publications by Nigerian writers such as Oyedepo (1992).

procession, many travelling by car⁷, and others on foot. The motorcade moved around the centre stopping at the sites of some of the derelict buildings in the city centre that Reverend Archibong had designated as 'spiritually strategic'. The half-completed structures were often the remnants of construction projects that had been started and then abandoned by the Cross River State government, or private companies and individuals. Calabar had numerous such buildings. Many projects had stagnated following sudden changes in political regimes or the dearth of private investment funds. The concrete forms of the foundations that had once marked land for the imminent investment had gradually been transformed into empty concrete shells. At each site Pastor Archibong prayed to break the 'ancestral covenants' that had been forged when the foundations of the building had been laid.

When the prayers had finished, Reverend Archibong started on the next phase of the tour, which he termed the 'raiding of the strongholds'. A small group of pastors went down to the Calabar River where they took a boat out on the water to 'break covenants' with *Anansa Ndem*, the most powerful 'traditional spirit' in Calabar. He said that in saying the prayers he was 'rebuking her [*Anansa*'s] authority and demanding that she should release her control over the city'. After that covenant breaking we have seen a restoration'. Before the covenant breaking, Reverend Archibong claimed, almost all Government properties were abandoned. 'The Federal Secretariat was abandoned at the foundation, nothing was done, EPZ [Export Processing Zone] was not there, the Teaching Hospital was abandoned, the Naval hospital was abandoned, the Cultural Centre was abandoned'. Furthermore, Reverend Archibong argued that 'Calabar people⁸ had no favour in the sight of the Federal Government - no appointments were made,

⁷The car was a particular symbol of wealth in Calabar. Unlike other cities in southern Nigeria, there were few cars on the roads in the centre of Calabar. Most people travel around the city using the cheaper *alalok*, motorcycle taxis, which are used to ferry passengers and goods. The motorcade at the covenant breaking tour was therefore remembered as a spectacular event.

⁸By 'our people' Pastor Archibong added that he referred to all the inhabitants of Calabar, indigenes and other, who have had very few posts within the Federal Government.

they would appoint other people in the Federal set up but they would not appoint us - why? - because we had lost sight before God'. However, after the covenant breaking the indigenes had become more prosperous and government investment had funded large projects such as the Cultural Centre. Reverend Archibong, argued that further benefits of the 1989 covenant-breaking tour had become evident during the years 1993-1995. The membership of the traditional associations was falling. Many professional and educated people who did come from high-ranking traditional families were no longer keen to exercise their rights to participate in traditional institutions such as the *ekpe* society;

Before whole elitic groups [were *ekpe* members], you would find that the people who really played *ekpe* were the civilised ones, educated people, professors, engineers, doctors all over they were the ones that really played *ekpe*. But now after the covenant breaking the light illumination has come - they see revival - God brought a new wave of revival in 1989 in the land, which resulted in the restoration of most of the abandoned projects. Many people now embraced God and shun secret societies.

Mrs Ekpenyoung, Deputy-Governor Cross River State 1991-1993

Reverend Archibong's critique of the marginal economic and political state of Calabar indigenes was echoed by the views of other interested participants at IBM. In 1993-4 many wealthier people who had held political office in the State Administration joined the ministry. As I explained in chapter five, at the Intercessor's Bible Mission many people considered themselves part of a social elite of educated and professional people. By the end of 1993, however, many of the elite group who were State employees were going unpaid and the annulment of the 1993 elections left people disenfranchised⁹. Mrs Ekpenyoung had been elected Deputy-

⁹Those Efiks at IBM who were entitled to posts in traditional government refused to participate.

Governor in the transition government in 1991 but with the return of military rule in 1994, she was working as a headmistress again¹⁰. While Reverend Archibong mainly voiced concerns about the economic and political power of traditional officeholders, Mrs Ekpenyoung was also keen to address corruption in the incumbent military State Government and the democratic State Administration to which she had been elected. Mrs Ekpenyoung was a middle aged Efik woman from Calabar who had been a long-standing member of the Catholic Church and had grown up in a family of professionally qualified people¹¹. She was born into an Efik royal family but, like Reverend Archibong, had not taken up hereditary titles. On one occasion I attended IBM with a friend who belonged to a professional organisation for headteachers, the Association of Cross River Teachers (ANCOTS). ANCOTS members met each year at a different church for a thanksgiving service and in 1993 they met at IBM because one of the group, Mrs Inyang, attended the ministry. During the service, prayers were said for the ANCOTS group and the teachers presented gifts to the pastor and his wife. The service was followed by a gathering at the pastor's house, a rare occurrence at the ministry that drew attention to the social ties that were being fostered between people in ANCOTS and the ministry.

Mrs Ekpenyoung told me later that she had been interested in the born-again movement for some time. Prior to her conversion to IBM, she had been a member of the Catholic Church, but had gone to Pentecostal revivals in the 1980s¹². She said her conversion was prompted by her experience of holding political office and the corruption she had witnessed. In 1991 Mrs Ekpenyoung was invited to be the running mate to the State Governor in local elections in the democratic transition programme. For twenty-two

¹⁰ Mrs Ekpenyoung was a school principal for fourteen years in Cross River State, first at Holy Child School, Ikom and then at Edgerley Girls' School in Calabar.

¹¹ Her mother had been a teacher and caterer and her father a magistrate. Her family was Roman Catholic and she was educated at Holy Child secondary school in Calabar. In the early 1970s she studied biology and education at the University of Nsukka.

months she was the Deputy Governor of Cross River State and lived in the newly built Governor's houses on the hillside that had been prepared for the transition to democratic government. The post of Deputy Governor was to last for four years but ended with the annulment of the transition process in June 1993¹³. During a later service at IBM she gave 'testimony' that her experiences of the corrupt arena of politics had not fundamentally changed her nor 'contaminated' her. In fact, Mrs Ekpenyoung considered that participating in IBM had enabled her to operate in the world of politics without being corrupted by it. As a 'God-fearing' person she said she had not been tempted by 'personal aggrandisement' or by pride or money while she was in political office. Since leaving office, IBM provided a social arena in which Mrs Ekpenyoung could have a public voice. She often got up and stood at the front of the church to 'give testimony' about events in her life.

Like Reverend Archibong, Mrs Ekpenyoung also considered that the institutions of 'traditional' government needed reform. She said that she had witnessed the falling away of the power and influence and popularity of the old elites in Calabar in the 1990s. This was a new phenomenon she said, for during the 1970s and up until the early 1980s, 'all the elites were in these things' (the traditional societies) and there were 'a lot of sacrifices' (libations) poured. Mrs Ekpenyoung was eligible for several 'traditional' privileges, including a hereditary chieftaincy title, which would entitle her to join the *Obong's* Council. However, she decided that she did not want to accept a chieftaincy title. One day in conversation at her house she told me was supposed to have been awarded a title at the 1994 Calabar Festival¹⁴, but had refused it because a libation would be poured at the ceremony, which she condemned as a 'sacrifice'. She said that she felt many people

¹² The first occasion occurred in 1985 at Edgerley Girls School when the school had become infested with rats and the staff had decided to hold a service and pray for a solution. Then in 1989, the United Christian Women, an interdenominational women's prayer group, held a crusade in Calabar.

¹³ The transition programme ended when General Babangida annulled the Presidential elections of June 12th 1993.

were no longer taking part in traditional ceremonies. Of the 1994 Calabar Festival she said, 'most of the cream of society were not there...there is this withdrawal...the event wasn't anything special. God is devaluing it, doing a new thing in the land'.

Mrs Ekpenyoung predicted that the born-again would prosper in the near future, for 'the word of God is like a hammer...by the time that people are living by the word of God by the standard of God, we shall possess our possessions'. Like Reverend Archibong, Mrs Ekpenyoung insisted that revival 'first must start with the indigenes, that is the people of Calabar, the Efiks, Efut and the Qua...the people from the place will first stand in the gap. Then all the others will be taught righteousnesses'. Mrs Ekpenyoung considered that it was the duty of Efik converts to educate other people in Calabar, because the Efiks had been Christians longer than anyone else and had been missionaries to their neighbours since the nineteenth century. Mrs Ekpenyoung said that other people at IBM considered that Calabar was undergoing a revival, 'God is raising people in this end time who are purely Efik people'¹⁵ who will stand in the gap and pray for the land. He will cause a revival, if our spirit prospers our land will prosper. Even the projects that were currently failing at the time, such as the Calcemco cement factory on the headland at Old Town, would soon flourish for 'God will cause blessings on that Calcemco and we will prosper'¹⁶. If we do not yet prosper, it is because that Calcemco has not yet fallen into the will of God. Maybe because we have compromised ourselves with other Gods, and so God has taken his hand away'. This process of revival had started, according to Mrs Ekpenyoung, before the end of the democratic transition government in Cross River State, while she was still Deputy Governor. She said the Export

¹⁴In December 1994 the first 'Calabar Festival' organised by the *Obong's* Palace. At the festival were many Efik masquerades and 'cultural displays'. The event opened with a service for the Palace entourage at Duke Town Presbyterian Church.

¹⁵Mrs Ekpenyoung later qualified this statement by adding that the category of 'purely Efik people' included the Qua and Efut.

¹⁶Calcemco was a cement factory on the headland in Old Town in Calabar. The factory was operating but had a very low level of productivity.

Processing Zone (EPZ) project¹⁷, 'was given to us by God. EPZ started immediately after the breaking of covenants in 1989. The President [Babangida] came here to launch a survey in 1991 and then when we [the transition government] got in 1992 it started.' However, after the end of the transition government no more progress had been made with the project. She concluded that 'God is just trying to test us. We have not, as a people within this state, recognised that EPZ is a God given thing'. In the past, she said, the people in Calabar were complacent, 'we just saw the oil and thought that we put it here'. As a consequence they were not able to benefit from the resources. The *ndem* (water spirits) 'throw confusion in the Bakassi River'. However in the future the ownership of Bakassi was clear;

God creates evil because we are living in confusion. We quarrel among ourselves. Once born-again people in Calabar recognise God, God will give them Bakassi, and with that security of ownership, 'the enemy shall no more drink of our wine, we will not plant and somebody else harvest'. So if we stand on that word and say 'Lord your word says that, we will not plant and my enemy harvest, whatsoever belongs to me belongs to me'. When the people come and drill the oil we will be different from other oil producing areas, we will benefit from it. God is yes and Amen, Lucifer is no'.

Liberty Gospel Ministry

Many Pentecostalists agreed that economic decline was caused by the perpetuation of 'demonic covenants' by 'traditionalists'. However, within the movement people had different ideas about how to address the problem of 'tradition' in Calabar. Liberty Gospel Ministry was founded in 1992 by a Holiness preacher, Evangelist Helen Ukpabio. Like Reverend Archibong, Mrs Ukpabio thought the ritual practices of the traditional elite should stop. She also shared Reverend Archibong's opinion that Calabar

¹⁷ The Export Processing Zone (EPZ) was a planned tax free zone for the import and export of goods. It was located upriver and was funded by Federal Government and Taiwanese investment. However, there were long delays and no fixed date for the opening of the zone.

would only 'progress' once the inhabitants of the city were 'delivered' from the ancestral covenants that were perpetuated in pacts with indigenous 'ancestral gods' or 'demi gods'. However, Mrs Ukpabio's view of the deliverance from ancestral covenants differed in emphasis from that of Reverend Archibong and other 'elite' Efik members of IBM like Mrs Ekpenyoung.

Opposition to the indigenous cosmology was the fundamental task of her ministry, and she said that she was pleased that she had converted a few 'strong' indigenes to the Liberty Gospel Ministry. Like many other people who came from outside the city, Mrs Ukpabio considered that Calabar indigenes were more 'traditional' than most people in the south-east. She believed that only the conversion of the Efik, Qua and Efut traditional elites would break the ancestral covenants in Calabar. In her view, the part played by Pastor Archibong and his elite Efik followers was marginal, as most Efiks were still taking part in traditional practices. She considered these converts to be her prized converts as they were the most difficult to recruit into the ministry, because 'the indigenes are given to the worshipping of these *ndem* deities. They celebrate them almost every weekend. They hardly become born-again because they hold on so much to their traditions and they respect their chieftaincies'. She believed that the indigenes prefer to stay at the Presbyterian Church, which 'encourages them to bring those things into the church'. She thought that it was difficult to recruit Calabar indigenes to her church because their traditions were 'strong', institutionalised, and the indigenous cosmology coherent. These few indigenous converts were anyway far outnumbered by the majority of Efik office-holders who never went to Pentecostal ministries and who retained their traditional titles. She said that;

The Efiks, they have more (tradition) than Akwa Ibom (people) because their tradition seems to be generally accepted, whereas in Akwa Ibom, one village will disagree with the other's tradition, this one will disagree, so you cannot say that this is the tradition of the Ibibios, when you

say that some other people will say, this is not our tradition, and they will break up, so there is not that kind of agreement. Whereas with the Efiks if you say *Anansa* it is the same *Anansa* to all of them...they hold it so much and they are all governed by it and it does not vary like the Akwa Ibom. The problem is that they believe that *Anansa* is God, they talk to her and she talks back to them, they can invoke her. *Abasi Enyong* is the God of Heaven, but *Abasi Isong*, they are talking about *Anansa Ndem*. They believe that the ancestors are going to team up with these spirits to support them [the Efiks].

She recognised that it was the traditionalists among the Efiks, Qua and Efut who still held certain rights of ownership of 'Calabar territory' and who would assert prior claim to any of the natural resources. Mrs Ukpabio emphasised that the regeneration of the economy in Calabar depended upon the conversion of the indigenes and not only upon the 'breaking of covenants'. She was critical of Reverend Archibong's covenant breaking, arguing that it did not tackle the conversion of the indigenous 'owners of the land' in Calabar, but instead only visited the 'strategic sites' that the elite claimed to own. The problem could only be resolved, she argued, if more Efiks converted. As she put it;

if I must go to strategic places to pray, to break covenants, I must get the chiefs, the rulers of the land, first to be born-again. If not it is not going to be effective. Assume you are from a family and I am a pastor and I see that there is something wrong in your family, then I call in so many other churches, [and] I come to your family and say I am breaking covenants, meanwhile you don't know what is covenant. You don't even know what is born again...and we shout and pray and make noise and then go away - you don't understand - you still continue in your normal family way, you'd think we were crazy. It is necessary to discuss with the rulers of those areas, the princes, they need to hand over their lives to Jesus Christ. The deities that these Efiks are worshipping are directly on the seat of the king¹⁸. The *Obong*. It is believed that it is *Anansa*, the water spirit, that is taking the king on a mission. How can you go and break covenant with *Anansa* demons when the king is already on a mission for *Anansa*?

¹⁸ This is a reference to the stool that the king sits upon at the coronation in the *eŋe asabo*. The stool is carved with designs that depict figures connected to the *ndem* cult.

They should stand in for their deities. A stranger cannot break a covenant in a strange land.

In conversation Mrs Ukpabio emphasised not only the overt displays of tradition by the indigenous officeholders, as Reverend Archibong and Mrs Ekpenyoung had, she also drew attention to the ordinary people of Christian denominations that she said covertly worshipped *ndem* (water spirits). She thought the influence of *ndem* and ancestral covenants could extend anywhere, even within the PCN, or within other Pentecostal ministries. One way in which this happened, Mrs Ukpabio believed, was that the 'powers' of traditional 'demons' perpetuated by the indigenes underwrote the many 'fake' and 'demonic' churches in Calabar. Particularly affected, she argued, were the 'independent' churches, such as the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star¹⁹, that had come to be known as the 'white-robe' or 'white-garment' churches by Pentecostals. Mrs Ukpabio had become a member of the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star soon after she moved to Calabar from Ikot Ekpene, Akwa Ibom State in 1979. She claimed to have been initiated into the inner circles. Mrs Ukpabio stayed in the Brotherhood until the late 1980s, when she was invited to a Pentecostal revival meeting by a nurse at the hospital where she was working and converted.

Mrs Ukpabio's opposition to the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star had made her a well-known Pentecostal preacher in Calabar. Mrs Ukpabio claimed that the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star was not a truly independent church, as it was founded upon the 'spiritual powers' of the indigenous cosmology and that her initiation into the Brotherhood had provided her with first hand knowledge and experience of the organisation. Just as Pastor Archibong claimed knowledge about the workings of the *ekpe* society, so Mrs Ukpabio asserted that her experience as an initiate within the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star gave her a unique and intimate knowledge of Calabar demons and demi-gods.

¹⁹ Celestial Church and the Eternal and Divine Cherubim and Seraphim denominations.

Mrs Ukpabio argued that the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star drew their spiritual powers ultimately from the 'demons' that made up the indigenous cosmology in Calabar and many people in Calabar are not even aware of the need to appease the gods, because they were unaware that they were involved in covenants in the first place. While traditionalists made ancestral covenants consciously, the involvement of the *ndem* within the Brotherhood meant that many members of the Brotherhood were drawn into ancestral covenants unknowingly. Particularly vulnerable were the newcomers who settled in Calabar. According to Mrs Ukpabio many migrants were joining the 'white garment' churches without realising that they were 'coming under the control of the demonic powers of the indigenes'. The 'ancestral covenants' that were at the root of the economic problems in Calabar were made with the 'demi-gods' of the indigenous Efik, Qua and Efut. However, all the inhabitants of Calabar could be influenced by these indigenous deities. If the inhabitants of Calabar did not make sacrifices to the *ndem* they were as vulnerable to 'spiritual attack' as any indigenous person. Only the conversion of the indigenes would resolve the issues. She argued that the 'only remedy is if we can preach enough for the people to become born-again, we must disturb them (the indigenes) until they become born-again. Then they will be able to face the situation what is going on in their place and stand in to break covenants'. Rather than leading the conversion, as Mrs Ekpenyoung had envisaged, Mrs Ukpabio considered that the Efiks would be the last to convert.

Mrs Ukpabio pointed to her success in preaching against the Brotherhood which had gained many converts from among the membership of the organisation. Just before she had started the Liberty Gospel Ministry in 1992, she co-ordinated a campaign to challenge Olumba's claim to 'rule' Calabar. In 1990 Olumba had announced that 'he would ride into Calabar on a donkey as the King of Kings'. However, she continued, Pentecostals counteracted the campaign. Mrs Ukpabio noted that 'every Christian ministry, even that IBM fellowship, had come along to participate in the

prayer sessions that she was leading'. Her knowledge of the Brotherhood had made her powerful enough to lead the opposition, 'I had told them the tricks [that Olumba used]' and she concluded that 'ever since I started giving this testimony [of the 'King of kings' tour] Olumba has declined in Calabar. They [the Brotherhood followers] used to run around. But now they do not, they are afraid'. On this occasion, she said, she had claimed the leadership of the Pentecostal movement in Calabar.

The Pentecostal movement in Calabar: shared perspectives and points of difference

Melucci has argued that the presence and the concerns of social movements are often diagnostic of social problems, that social movements 'announce to society that a fundamental problem exists in a given area. They have a growing symbolic function and the mere existence of a symbolic challenge is in itself a method of unmasking the dominant codes a different way of perceiving and naming the world' (Melucci 1988:248). The views expressed by different Pentecostal ministries and their members did raise explicit questions about political and economic concerns in Calabar. It seems that when Pentecostal ministries confronted social and political issues the image and sense of the movement as a community was promoted while differences in status and identity were muted.

The people in the Pentecostal ministries I encountered did, in many ways, perceive themselves to belong to a wider movement. This sense was founded there was a shared body of doctrine, that people from different ministries participated together in joint 'revival' meetings and to host crusades. The Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) integrated people into a large social network, which extended across the country and overseas. The size of the movement, and the global affiliations, lends a confidence

and authority to Pentecostals that has been reflected in their increasingly overt criticism of the Federal Government. In Calabar the individual Pentecostal ministries were therefore also integrated by their shared opposition to the corruption of the incumbent government politicians. Like Pentecostals elsewhere in Nigeria (Marshall 1993), in Calabar people often represented the government that they opposed as both being possessed by and actively deploying 'satanic powers'. For example, Mrs Ukpabio, the founder of Liberty Gospel Ministry, often criticised the 'unrestrained greed for wealth and power' that she said was common among politicians. She interpreted the causes of corruption as satanic, saying that 'in Nigeria today we are suffering because of rulers possessed with Luciferic spirits' which has led to the 'forceful taking over of the Presidency at gunpoint'. In her opinion, politicians used 'evil spirits' in order to secure promotion in government, they 'take resources and transfer them into the spirit world...the more they kill people the more promotion they will get'. Although 'people see angels as weak' and the power of the 'revival' was still underestimated, she argued that the churches 'are more powerful than the whole Nigerian army'.

In addition to open criticism of Federal government politicians and the assertion of political ambitions, the Pentecostal movement exerted a local political impact in its criticism of 'traditional' government institutions. The people who joined ministries in Calabar, like the rest of the population, had to deal with local institutions of political organisation. To some degree, the form that local political institutions took influenced the way that Pentecostals articulated their political critique. Like other social movements, Pentecostal fellowships are social networks that are 'submerged in everyday life' (Melucci 1988:244). The social relations and cultural categories which structure the daily lives of the participants influence the form the social movement takes. Social movements 'emerge out of the very experience of daily life, and cannot be understood independently of this submerged cultural background' (Escobar 1992:407). The cultural

background for the Pentecostal movement in Calabar included the government structures of post-colonial society. In the absence of democratically elected representatives, local government in Calabar comprised of the paramount rulers of the three indigenous ethnic groups and their councils. State and Federal government were not accessible to the inhabitants of Calabar, except through traditional councils. The Pentecostal movement articulated a general resentment of these powers of the traditional elite. As Mrs Ukpabio put it, 'idol worshippers' in power in Calabar have 'allowed witches to prosper in the city'. These witches 'have hands in Calabar's decline', and they have 'lobbied themselves into government somehow'.

The political struggle that the ministries engaged in against 'traditionalists' was also expressed through using metaphors of territory. Different ministries shared a sense of Pentecostal 'territory' in Calabar that resisted the incursion of the 'ancestral covenants'. Territorial conflict was a metaphor for the power struggle that existed in the political domain, in which Pentecostals often represented their movement as taking part in a battle in which 'territory' could be lost and gained. People at IBM argued that the covenant breaking tour had marked the first public challenge by born-again Christians in Calabar to the authority of the traditional landowners, the members of the *ekpe* society. 'Territory' was not only about actual ownership of land, for, as I show below, Pentecostal preachers also claimed occupation of an area through prayer. At IBM a twenty-four hour prayer centre was built that was continually occupied by people 'fighting against attacks' from the 'demonic spirits'. The opposition to the 'satanic' control exerted over the city by local government, underpinned by *ndem*, was a shared concern in the Pentecostal movement. The Pentecostal opposition to 'tradition' and to what they called the 'nominal' Christianity practised by the paramount rulers, highlighted the structures that link the traditional indigenous elites and the Federal Government. In Nigeria, as in other post-colonial states in Africa (Mamdani 1996), 'traditional authorities'

continue to participate in local level administrative structures and traditional leaders often occupy the same offices designated to represent ethnic groups that were established in the colonial era. Questioning the legitimacy of traditional authority, involves highlighting the absence of modern representative government at the local level²⁰.

Conclusion

While Pentecostal ministries shared a common critical vocabulary as regards traditional institutions, their conduct towards these institutions differed. The way that different born-again ministers and their followers took action to deal with the 'problem' of 'demonic' indigenous government and their own sense of distance from Federal Government was in part informed by their ethnic, occupational and social identities. Also interactions were influenced by the degree to which each ministry wanted to construct a distinctive identity. When a new ministry formed it had to set itself apart from others in order to recruit members. While all Pentecostals shared the deliverance gospel and opposed traditional offices, other aspects of social identity were readily available as markers that designated difference between ministries and were used to justify their 'distinct' and 'unique' approaches to the issues. The comparison of IBM and Liberty Gospel Ministry highlights the many strands of opinion that existed within and between the ministries in the movement. These claims to uniqueness were influenced by the cross-cutting sets of social ties in which the participants were involved. In different ways, concerns with ancestral covenants were refracted through the prism of social interaction between indigenes and migrants. Diverse perspectives on the breaking of the ancestral covenants of the 'old indigenous elite' were expressed by people

²⁰ In the colonial period, colonial government resisted such religious protests because their attacks upon the traditional undermined the authority of the chiefs through which the state imposed control at local levels (Fields 1982,1985).

in IBM and Liberty Gospel Church. The Efiks, Qua and Efut were considered to have sustained their 'traditions' far more than other ethnic groups in the city. The indigenes were considered by people from outside the city to be particularly 'trapped' by these 'traditions' and in the words of Mrs Ukpabio at Liberty Gospel Ministry, 'the Efiks are the cause of the [economic] problems in Calabar because they still pursue their traditional beliefs so much'.

The Pentecostal ministries together formed a religious movement that shared doctrines, and social gatherings in the form of revivals and crusades. People in the ministries often read the same literature and listened to the same radio broadcasts. When people travelled outside Calabar they were ready to attend similar ministries elsewhere in the country. The Pentecostal ministries also articulated a shared opposition to traditional institutions of government in the city, as well as a critique of the corruption at State and Federal levels. Pentecostals said they shared an opposition to traditional government because its institutions rested upon the power of 'demonic' spirits within the indigenous cosmology. The Pentecostal ministries provided a social space in which a critique of government structures was first formed and then articulated outwards into the wider community. In the process of addressing the problems of traditional government social differences between particular Pentecostals emerged. Differences in social identity based upon ethnicity, gender, age and the experience of migration influenced the particular way in which traditional institutions in Calabar were addressed by people.

The new Pentecostal ministries that were forming in the early 1990s also had a sharpened sense of opposition towards Islam and also a heightened criticism of other Christian denominations in the city. The new Pentecostal ministries defined themselves in sharp contrast to other Christian denominations. Mission churches were termed 'nominal' or 'orthodox', and 'white-garment' churches were described as 'demonic'. Even other

Pentecostal churches were sometimes described as 'demonic' by Pentecostals who wanted to discredit that particular ministry. The criticism of other churches by the new Pentecostal movement suggests that the religious pluralism documented in Calabar by Hackett in the 1970s and early 1980s has since then been greatly altered by the growth of the Pentecostal movement. Hackett had concluded that the 'religious pluralism' in Calabar was characterised by, 'the readiness to experiment with a variety of religious institutions or groups'. This, she argued, 'reveals the tolerance with which people view religious diversity...a tolerance that ensures the smooth functioning of a religiously plural system' (1989:362). The new Pentecostals are actively pursuing a modernisation of the secular realm of society, its political economy, yet this is being carried out in terms which attribute substantial reality to witchcraft, satanic beings, demonic water spirits, and ancestral spirits. Not only did the Pentecostals articulate and amplify a generalised resentment directed at the post-colonial state, but they did so in such an absolute way as to challenge the basis for the previous religious toleration described by Hackett as prevalent in Calabar.

Chapter Nine Conclusion

In the thesis I have analysed the impact that the Pentecostal movement has had upon other religious and social groups in Calabar during the early 1990s. I have focused on the way that the Pentecostal ministries engaged with the Presbyterian Church and the institutions of indigenous religion. The strong Pentecostal stance against what it defines as tradition has prompted the Presbyterian Church to distance itself from these traditional institutions. At the same time, Pentecostal practices have been introduced into the Presbyterian Church. These changes have been opposed by traditional Presbyterians. Limited anthropological research has been done on mission founded denominations in Africa. This thesis contributes an examination of the way that the Presbyterian Church was defining itself in relation to Pentecostalism and the institutions of traditional religion.

The Pentecostal movement in Calabar is diverse, encompassing different forms of church organisation and including ministries that emphasise holiness or prosperity doctrines. The thesis documents changes occurring within ministries founded in the 1990s. During this period, participants in newly formed prayer groups in the Pentecostal movement placed a high priority upon establishing a ministry as a permanent institution. This contrasted with the organisational forms that were prevalent in the Pentecostal movement in Calabar during the 1970s, when permanent ministries were considered too 'denominational'. In the 1990s most people who started a prayer group expressed the intention to establish a ministry. Often within a few months a small ministry formed. The ministries were corporate bodies, managing land or property holdings or financial assets. The increase in the number of Pentecostal ministries has had several consequences. The Federal Government has increased the regulation of the ministries through a registration programme. Also, the many new ministries

together comprise a network that is able to generate shared resources and can provide sponsorship to fund projects and assist new ministries.

Evidence from the research also indicates that the number of Pentecostal ministries that focus upon the prosperity gospel rather than the holiness gospel is increasing in Calabar. The prosperity teachings have influenced the Pentecostal movement in Calabar in several ways. Firstly, the attitude towards money in the church has changed. Conspicuous consumption is not criticised in the new ministries. The teachings on donating money to the ministry have increased the wealth of many ministries. Some denominations have become identified as 'wealthy' or 'elite' ministries and openly display their wealth. The rise in the number of prosperity ministries also seems to have prompted a cynicism towards the motives of some ministries by people in the holiness ministries and outside the Pentecostal movement.

In the Pentecostal movement as a whole in Calabar the proportion of people from different social groups making up the membership has remained unchanged. Most people going to the ministries were younger men and women, and middle-aged married women. However, there do appear to have been two key changes. Firstly, there has been an increase in the number of women who found churches and preach in them. Secondly, the prosperity gospel appears to have prompted an increase in the numbers of younger men who attend Pentecostal ministries. It is generally agreed by most Pentecostals that the older male indigenes were the social group least likely to join a ministry and that the conversion of this group would mark a significant change in the movement.

A major theme of the thesis has been the way that the Pentecostal movement has provoked debates in the early 1990s within the Presbyterian Church in Calabar. These debates concerned the extent to which the PCN

should incorporate Pentecostal practices and how the Church should interact with traditional institutions. Traditional and born-again sections emerged within the congregation at Duke Town Church as questions were raised about whether people should combine the church office of eldership with holding traditional titles. Events that occurred during field research, at the Calabar Festival and the Hope Waddell centenary, highlighted these issues. The debates between traditionalists and born-again Presbyterians in the PCN could well intensify when arrangements are next made to crown an *Obong* in Duke Town Church.

Though the issues that were being debated in Duke Town parish were local, they also had wider significance for the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria. Calabar, and particularly Duke Town parish, were considered the historical centre of the church. People outside Calabar associated the church with the city and particularly with the indigenous people in the city. The decision to introduce Pentecostalism into the Calabar church could be viewed as part of a larger change, a move away from the denomination's affiliations with the indigenous elite, its traditions and with a specific locality. In many ways this was a retrospective adjustment, which followed the decline of membership in Calabar and the increased membership in other parts of the east. The introduction of Pentecostalism was also bringing a new financial organisation into the church and there were plans to build a new PCN national headquarters in Abuja. The study of the Presbyterian Church in Calabar points to changes occurring throughout the denomination that could be researched elsewhere in Nigeria or West Africa.

The thesis concludes that the sense of religious pluralism and tolerance noted by Hackett in the 1970s and early 1980s has been significantly diminished in the 1990s. The change is, at least in part, due to the anti-ecumenical stance of most new Pentecostal ministries and the opposition in the Pentecostal movement towards traditional religion. The public displays

of traditional religious practices and traditional societies that were documented by Savage in the early 1980s (1985) seemed muted in the early 1990s. The research points to the pronounced sense of hostility towards traditional practices that pervaded the town in the early 1990s. Often people speaking against traditional practices were considered to have been emboldened by the vocal criticism of these practices that emanated from the Pentecostals. Perhaps the most graphic example of this changed atmosphere was the burning of the tree that was a site used by *ndem* adherents on the headland in January 1995.

The thesis has addressed the particular ways that Presbyterians and Pentecostals have engaged with the themes of tradition and modernity. These themes are used to set the terms of debates of the 1990s within wider contexts of historical and social change. The section on the history of the mission in Calabar shows how the mission was defined as both traditional and modern in the colonial context. The mission was considered by many people in Calabar to have fostered a close relationship with the institutions of indigenous society in the early years of the colonial presence. Later, in the twentieth century, the mission embraced the modernisation programme of colonial state, providing education and health care. When the State government took over schools and hospitals in the 1970s, the PCN was left with a lack of focus for its work outside the boundaries of the ministries. The Pentecostal movement instead has questioned the projects of secular modernity that were pursued by the Presbyterian Church in the colonial era. For example, many Pentecostals often promoted what they regarded as the insights of African spirituality and cast doubt upon the authority of western science.

In exploring these themes the thesis adds to the body of work in anthropology that aims to explore the different forms that modernity can take (Miller 1994, 1995a). I have considered aspects of modernity that

seemed relevant to people's lives in Calabar. I focused upon the complexities of negotiating social and religious identities in an urban, commercial economy and the process of incorporation into the globalised Pentecostal movement. The thesis provides a study of how Presbyterians and Pentecostals related their religious participation to other areas of their social life. I examined how markers of social difference such as ethnicity, gender and economic status informed social interaction among people both outside and inside the ministries.

The globalised Pentecostal movement provides a model of doctrine, organisational forms and aspirations. However, the thesis points to the ways in which Pentecostals in Calabar interpret these globalised forms to address particular localised concerns. Important among these concerns were the management and distribution of local resources. Pentecostals wanted to exercise control over land and property in the town and used metaphors of territory to make these claims. The deterritorialised identity of the convert that Marshall-Fratani observed in Lagos appeared less evident in Calabar (Marshall-Fratani 1998). As Pentecostal ministries were investing more resources in establishing permanent institutions, their concern with the defence of their local interests appears to intensify, while their discussions of 'global outreach' waned.

Among those who migrated to Calabar to find work, contact with the modern, urban cash economy does not necessarily bring disenchantment with spiritual beliefs. Indeed, as in other parts of West Africa, spiritual power has been extended to encompass the workings of a variety of social institutions, including state bureaucracies and government departments (Geschiere 1997, Marshall-Fratani 1998). In this way Pentecostalism provided an arena and a language for the critique of political institutions. To analyse the impact of the Pentecostal movement upon wider social and political institutions I used theoretical perspectives from the study of social

movements (Escobar 1992, Melucci 1988) and focused upon the way people involved in Pentecostal ministries forged social networks that encompassed social interaction in the home and at work. I showed how, on certain occasions, these social networks entered wider political debate. The wider political concerns that seemed most common in Calabar were debates about the power wielded by traditional officeholders through their links of patronage with State politicians. In Calabar it was commonly said that someone in the *Obong*'s Council 'had an ear to the government', a channel of communication. The traditional hierarchies were structured by social hierarchies of age, ethnicity and gender. The Pentecostal ministries, however, provided a social arena in which younger men and women could form associations not structured by these social hierarchies.

The ways in which the Pentecostal movement in Africa will influence politics in the continent is a matter of debate (Gifford 1995b:6). In Calabar, however, the Pentecostal critique of the traditional officeholders did make an impact upon the workings of local, city government. Pentecostals also exercised political influence through the public opposition that they vocalised about levels of corruption that occurred in government. However, whether it is possible that the Pentecostal movement could articulate a united political front remains unclear. The fact that there are not the ecumenical links that have brought a wide power base to other religious movements in Africa (Ranger 1995:20) suggests that the Pentecostal movement will remain fragmented.

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Appendix I Questionnaire

The questionnaire aims to find out about Pentecostalism in Calabar. It forms part of a research project about Pentecostalism in Calabar at Edinburgh University.

1. Where were you born and how old are you?
2. Are you female/male?
3. Are you married or single?
4. Have you got any children?
5. What is your ethnic group?
6. What is your job?
7. Which church do you attend?
8. How many times do you attend each week?
9. Which churches have you attended in the past?
10. What makes a good church?
11. Are you born-again?
12. How did your conversion happen?
13. Do other family members go to the same ministry?
14. What is your opinion of the *ekpe* society, *ndem*?
15. Are you afraid of spiritual attacks?
16. Should the *Obong* be crowned at Duke Town Church?
17. Why was the Calabar Festival held in 1994?
18. What should be the role of the paramount rulers today?

19. What was the impact of the Scottish Presbyterian mission in Calabar?
20. How would you describe Pentecostalism?
21. Why are there so many Pentecostal ministries in Calabar now?
22. How are orthodox churches and white-robe churches different from Pentecostal ministries?
23. Are there differences between Pentecostal ministries?
24. How would you describe the services at your ministry and how do you participate in them?
25. Is it possible for Pentecostals to become wealthy through spiritual means?

Appendix II Glossary

<i>abang</i>	pot/girl's dance.
<i>abasi</i>	supreme being/God.
<i>abasi enyong</i>	god above.
<i>Abasi Ibom</i>	God.
<i>abasi isong</i>	god below.
<i>abiaidion</i>	witchdoctor, sorcerer.
<i>adiadha ke eburutu</i>	honorary Efik title.
<i>alalok</i>	lit. climb up, the name for motorcycle taxis.
<i>amanaison eke obio</i>	indigenous lit. of our place.
<i>awa ndem</i>	<i>ndem</i> specialist.
<i>ayan</i>	ceremonial broom used in <i>Obong</i> 's coronation.
<i>eke obio</i>	indigenous lit. our place.
<i>Anansa Ikang</i>	As <i>Anansa Ndem</i> see below.
<i>Anansa Ndem</i>	main <i>ndem</i> spirit.
<i>anwana okuk esie ke idut</i>	migrant worker (lit. he/she makes money in other places).
<i>akwa ufok</i>	lit. big house, Duke Town Presbyterian Church.
<i>bidak</i>	hat worn by <i>etuboms</i> .
<i>ebete ukebe</i>	Nickname for people in the Apostolic Church, (lit. those who do not take purgatives).
<i>ebonko</i>	masquerade of <i>ekpe</i> society.
<i>ediomi</i>	covenant.

<i>efe asabo</i>	<i>ndem</i> shrine
<i>efe ekpe</i>	<i>ekpe</i> shrine.
<i>eka</i>	mother.
<i>ekandito</i>	<i>ndem</i> spirit, guardian of children.
<i>ekebi</i>	box.
<i>ekom</i>	tree.
<i>ekondo</i>	world.
<i>ekpe</i>	leopard/ spirit of the forest.
<i>ekpe idem</i>	masquerade of the <i>Ekpe</i> society.
<i>ekpenyoung</i>	A spirit, also a common first/family name.
<i>ekpin</i>	palm fronds.
<i>ekpo</i>	ghost
<i>ekpuk</i>	lineage
<i>eset efik</i>	lit. Efik fashion, used to translate 'tradition'.
<i>ererimbot</i>	the human world on earth.
<i>esien</i>	clan.
<i>esien efik itiaba</i>	the seven Efik clans.
<i>ete</i>	father.
<i>etinyin abasi</i>	god.
<i>etinyin</i>	the oldest male in patrilineage, househead before the office of <i>etubom</i> was introduced.
<i>etubom</i>	traditional leader selected from house members to be on the <i>Obong's</i> Council.
<i>etubom obio</i>	clan head (Efik).

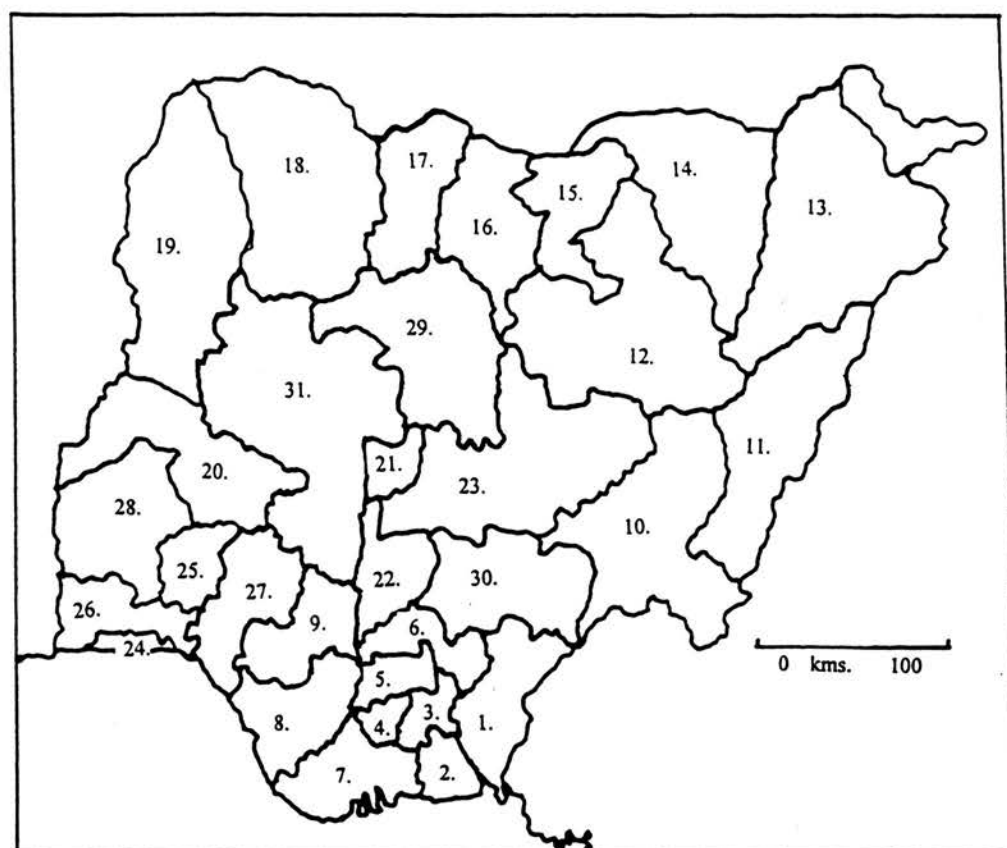
<i>fik</i>	to oppress.
<i>ibuot ufok</i>	head of house.
<i>idem</i>	body/person.
<i>idem ekpe</i>	<i>ekpe</i> masquerader.
<i>idem ikwo</i>	<i>ekpe</i> masquerader.
<i>idiokiton</i>	greed.
<i>ifot</i>	witchcraft.
<i>ikang</i>	fire.
<i>ikpaisong</i>	clan (Ibibio).
<i>ikpaya</i>	ceremonial staff used in the <i>Obong</i> 's coronation.
<i>inyang</i>	river, also a common first name.
<i>isineyin</i>	envy
<i>isop iban</i>	women's society (lit. <i>isop</i> penalty/fine, <i>iban</i> , women).
<i>ufan</i>	friend.
<i>ufok abasi</i>	church lit. God's house.
<i>kara</i>	to rule (vb.).
<i>mbok</i>	gathering together.
<i>mbre</i>	to play, used to describe the performance of masquerades.
<i>mbukpo</i>	the ancestors.
<i>Muri</i>	King, traditional title of the paramount head of the Efut.
<i>musang abasi</i>	God's angels/messengers (another name for <i>ndem</i>).
<i>ndem</i>	water spirit.
<i>ndo</i>	marriage.
<i>ndok</i>	a gathering of people together.

<i>ndom</i>	chalk applied to body during <i>ndem</i> worship.
<i>Ndidem</i>	King, title of the paramount ruler of the Quas.
<i>ndok</i>	gathering together.
<i>nnea</i>	Ibibio term for water spirit.
<i>ntinya</i>	coronation ceremony at <i>efe asabo</i> .
<i>obio</i>	town.
<i>obio mbukpo</i>	land of the ancestors.
<i>obio ndem</i>	land of <i>ndem</i> .
<i>Obong</i>	King, title of the paramount ruler of the Efiks.
<i>oboti ikwo.</i>	tree the leaves of which are carried by the <i>ekpe</i> masquerader, <i>idem</i>
<i>okpum</i>	greed.
<i>oku ndem</i>	<i>ndem</i> priest.
<i>ubom</i>	canoe.
<i>ufok</i>	house, a social group consisting of the patrilineal descendants with other incorporated members.
<i>ukara</i>	cloth worn as wrapper by <i>ekpe</i> initiates made in Igboland.
<i>ukpong</i>	soul.
<i>unadot</i>	the visible world.

Appendix III Abbreviations

ANCOTS	Association of Cross River State Teachers
APELLAC	Association for the Promotion of Efik Language, Literature and Culture
BCS	The Brotherhood of the Cross and Star
CCN	Christian Council of Nigeria
CRS	Cross River State
EPZ	Export Processing Zone
FESTAC	Festival of Arts and Culture
IAI	International African Institute
IBM	Intercessors Bible Mission
PAMOL	Palm Oil Industries Limited
MOSOP	Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People
OMPADEC	Oil and Mineral Producing States Development Committee
PCEN	The Presbyterian Church of Eastern Nigeria
PCN	The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria
PFN	The Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria
UNICAL	The University of Calabar
UPC	The United Presbyterian Church
USC	The United Secession Church

Appendix IV Map of Nigeria



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|----------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Cross River | 16. Kano |
| 2. Akwa Ibom | 17. Katsina |
| 3. Abia | 18. Sokoto |
| 4. Imo | 19. Kebbi |
| 5. Anambra | 20. Kwara |
| 6. Enugu | 21. Federal Capital Territory |
| 7. Rivers | 22. Kogi |
| 8. Delta | 23. Plateau |
| 9. Edo | 24. Lagos |
| 10. Taraba | 25. Osun |
| 11. Adamawa | 26. Ogun |
| 12. Bauchi | 27. Ondo |
| 13. Borno | 28. Oyo |
| 14. Yobe | 29. Kaduna |
| 15. Jigawa | 30. Benue |
| | 31. Niger |